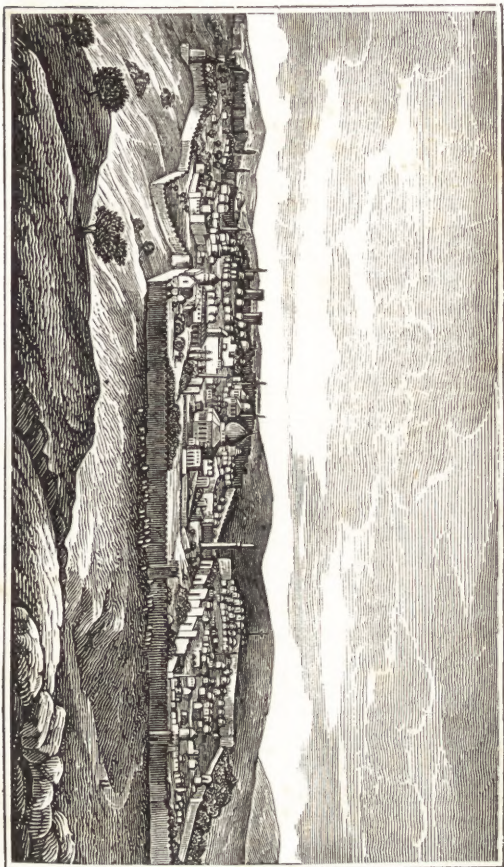






44

JERUSALEM, AS SEEN FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.





NOTES,
ILLUSTRATIVE AND EXPLANATORY,
ON THE
HOLY GOSPELS:

ARRANGED ACCORDING TO
TOWNSEND'S CHRONOLOGICAL NEW TESTAMENT.

BY JOSEPH LONGKING,
Junior Superintendent of the Greene-street S. School, New-York.

VOLUME IV.

FROM OUR LORD'S PUBLIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM, ONE
WEEK BEFORE THE CRUCIFIXION, TO HIS ASCENSION
INTO HEAVEN.

DESIGNED TO ACCOMPANY LONGKING'S QUESTIONS, VOL. IV.

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NOTES ON THE GOSPELS.

LESSON I.

[A. D. 29.]

Christ's triumphal procession to Jerusalem—His lament over the city—He proceeds to the temple, attended by an immense concourse of people—Casts out therefrom, a second time, the buyers and sellers—Heals the sick—Reproves the priests and scribes—Receives and answers the request of certain Greeks—Declares the object of his mission—Returns to Bethany.—MATT. xxi. 1-17; MARK xi. 1-11; LUKE xix. 29-46; JOHN xii. 12-50.

LUKE xix. 29-46.

AND it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the mount of Olives*, he sent two of his disciples,

NOTES ON LUKE xix. 29-46.

Verses 29-31. *When he (Jesus) was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany*] The words "when he was come nigh," &c., probably mean *while he was yet in the neighbourhood of* these villages, on his way from Bethany to Jerusalem. Matthew says, "when they were come to Bethphage." Bethphage was a small village situated on the eastern declivity of the mount of Olives, somewhat nearer to Jerusalem than was Bethany. Its name signifies "the house of figs," and is supposed to have been given it because of the number of fig-trees growing in its neighbourhood. According to Dr. Robinson, no trace of the village now exists. (For a brief notice of "Bethany," see vol. iii., p. 318.) *At the mount*

30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against *you*; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied,

of Olives] Jerusalem was environed on all sides by lofty hills. The mount of Olives lies on the east side of the city, from which it is separated only by the narrow valley of Jehoshaphat. It is usually said to have three summits, the middle, and apparently highest of which, stands directly opposite the city. The elevation of this central peak is about 2556 feet above the level of the sea, and 416 above the valley of Jehoshaphat. Toward the south the mountain sinks into a lower ridge; across this part



Mount of Olives—central peak

leads the usual road to Bethany. Toward the north, at the distance of about a mile, rises another summit, nearly or quite as high as the middle one.

From the bridge which crosses the valley of Jehoshaphat or Kedron three paths lead up to the summit of the

whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring *him hither*.

mount. "One, a mere footpath, strikes up in a direct course along a steep projecting part of the hill; a second passes up more circuitously to the left, where the hill retires a little and has a more gradual slope; and the third winds up along the face further south. The sides of the mountain are still sprinkled with olive-trees, though not thickly; and a few other trees are occasionally seen. I took the middle path, which brought me out at the church of the Ascension and the mosque, situated on the summit. Around them are a few huts forming a miserable village. Here one is able to look down upon the city, and survey at least the roofs of the houses. The view may be said indeed to be a very full one; but it is not particularly interesting. It presents a dull mixed mass of roofs and domes; but the distance is too great to be able to distinguish the buildings or the topography of the city in any good degree. A more pleasing view is obtained from various points lower down the side of the mountain."—*Prof. Robinson*.

Being arrived at Bethphage Jesus called two of his disciples unto him, and commanded them to go "into the village over against"—that is, *opposite to*, them; telling them that on entering it they would "find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat;" which colt they were to loose, and bring to him. Matthew says, (xxi. 2,) the disciples would find "an ass tied, and a colt with her," and that they were to bring both animals: the other evangelists notice only the colt. This trifling discrepancy involves, however, no contradiction, and therefore makes not against the veracity of either of these historians. Indeed, a very good reason for the silence of the

31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose *him*? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

later evangelists respecting the mother of the colt, and for St. Matthew's distinct notice of her, exists in the fact, that there is nothing in the narrations of Mark, Luke, or John, which calls for any reference to the dam; whereas Matthew, designing to bring out Zechariah's prophecy relative to Christ's public entry into Jerusalem, necessarily refers to both the ass and her foal. Perhaps the colt could not readily be recognised to be a *foal*, but by the presence of the dam; if so, the company of the mother ass was intimately connected with the clear fulfilment of the prediction.—If any objections were made to the disciples taking the animals, they were instructed to say that "the Lord," or master, "had need of them," and assured that they would then be permitted to take them. It thus appears that our Lord did not intend his messengers should carry off these creatures without leave; for he evidently knew that the owner would question the disciples as to their proceedings, and on receiving their reply would authorize the taking them. That permission Mark (xi. 6.) expressly declares was granted.

What village it was to which the two disciples were sent is not now known: it would seem, however, to have been in the suburbs of Jerusalem: probably between that city and Bethphage, which neighbourhood is allowed to have been once very populous. Our Lord's intimation that the colt was unbroken, (specified in the words "whereon yet never man sat,") and consequently had not been subject to any servile labour, is of some importance; 1st, because that only such animals "as had never borne the yoke, or been employed for ordinary purposes,

32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

were (by a custom common to all the ancients, whether Jews or Gentiles) employed for sacred uses; (see Deut. xxi. 3, 1 Sam. vi. 7;) and 2dly, as containing a fulfilment of a part of Zechariah's prediction.

Verse 32. *They found even as he had said*] Whitby very properly adduces this circumstance as a proof of our Lord's prescience.

Verse 35. *They brought him, &c.*] That is, "the colt," accompanied, as Matthew states, by its dam. *They cast their garments upon the colt*] And, as appears from Matthew, (xxi. 7,) upon the mother ass also. These "garments" were doubtless their mantles, or cloaks;—their outer clothing. *They set Jesus thereon*] Meaning, they set him on the "garments" which had been spread on the colt's back. The placing of Jesus on these garments may have been regarded as a mark of exalted dignity; perhaps as an acknowledgment of his royalty, for from 2 Kings ix. 13, it would seem that a somewhat similar treatment of Jehu was considered equivalent to proclaiming and acknowledging him king.

"All this was done," says Matthew, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet"—meaning the prophet Zechariah, (chap. ix. 9,) by whom the prediction referred to had been delivered some four hundred and ninety years before this time, saying—

“Tell ye the daughter of Zion,
Behold, thy King cometh unto thee,
Meek, and sitting upon an ass,
And a colt, the foal of an ass.’”

It is thought that the translation of the last two lines does not clearly convey the prophet's meaning, as it implies that the Saviour would ride upon both animals, either alternately or at the same moment: both which suppositions are inadmissible, because contrary to the declarations of the inspired historians. If the word *even* were used at the commencement of the fourth line, instead of the word “and,” the sense would more clearly appear; many eminent scholars do so render the original. The word “meek,” is probably used to intimate the unostentatious manner of our Lord's entrance into the holy city; which was strongly opposed to the “pride and circumstance” of earthly kings. By “daughter of Zion,” the city of Jerusalem is meant, (or rather, its inhabitants,) to which the appellation “daughter” is applied as a title of endearment. “Sion” is the name of one of the hills on which the city stands, and the spot on which the royal palace was erected; it consequently became early celebrated, and its name soon passed into a synonyme for Jerusalem.

The declaration of Matthew that “all this was done *that it might be fulfilled which was spoken,*” &c., simply means *that thus was fulfilled*; for, as Mr. Watson cogently remarks, the end [design] of Christ's action was not merely or chiefly to fulfil the prophecy, but the prophecy was fulfilled by it, while the action itself rested upon other reasons. These appear to have been, 1st. To *assert* his majesty, as in truth the king Messiah; 2d. To give an opportunity to the people publicly to declare their

36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

belief that he was the Messiah, the son of David, of which they were now generally persuaded, although their views of the true character of the Messiah were confused and erring. 3d. To profess publicly, in the very metropolis of Judea, by appropriating to himself a prophecy which both ancient and modern Jewish commentators have referred to their Messiah, that he was *that* "king" of Zion of whom the prophet Zechariah had spoken as coming "riding upon the foal of an ass." It is further probable, that by thus riding upon an "ass," Jesus meant to express the peaceable character of his rule, as will more fully appear by a careful perusal of Zechariah's prophecy, especially of the tenth verse.

By comparing John xii. 12, with Matt. xxi. 8, 9, and Luke xix. 37, 38, it will be seen that this journey was undertaken on the day following that on which the great resort to Bethany, mentioned John xii. 9, and noticed at the close of the preceding volume, had taken place; which time answers, probably, to our Monday in passion week, consequently four days before the crucifixion. It further appears, from John's statement, that Christ's intention of visiting Jerusalem on this day was known, (having probably been learned by the visitors to Bethany, and by them made public,) for he says that "much people that were come to the feast, *when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem*—went forth to meet him." This procession may have joined our Lord at Bethphage, when about to resume his journey to the metropolis.

Verse 36. *They spread their clothes in the way*] This seems to be spoken especially of the multitude, though

37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen;

it is by no means improbable that the apostles and disciples had some share in the transaction. Matthew tells us that "a very great multitude spread their garments in the way;" and that others "cut down branches from the trees"—John says "palm trees"—"and strawed them in the way." This conduct was probably indicative of joy on their part, as well as a of distinguished respect to our Lord. Let us learn from the example of the Jews in this instance, to pay all possible honour to God our Saviour. His amazing love toward us demands at our hands the consecration of all we have and are to his glory.

The practice of strewing with garments, branches, or flowers, as a sign of honour, the road over which remarkably exalted or distinguished persons were shortly to pass, was common among ancient nations, and is still had recourse to occasionally. Plutarch mentions, as an evidence of respect shown by the Roman soldiery to Cato the younger, that they laid down their garments for him to tread upon; and the Greek poet Æschylus represents Clytemnestra as receiving Agamemnon, on his return from Troy, with like honours. A similar custom is still prevalent in the East Indies, as appears from the statement of Mr. Roberts. "I was not a little surprised," says he, "soon after my arrival in the East, when going to visit a native gentleman, to find the path through the garden covered with white garments. I hesitated, but was told it was for 'my respect.' I must walk on them to show I accepted the honour."

Verse 37. *When he was come nigh*] Meaning, per-

38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the

haps, nigh to Jerusalem. *Even at the descent of the Mount of Olives*] Having crossed the ridge, and now approaching the western declivity of the mount, opposite the capital. *The whole of the disciples began to rejoice, &c.*] In which rejoicing, as appears from Matthew and Mark, "the multitudes that went before and that followed after," united. By "disciples," here, we are probably to understand Christ's followers and friends. From this statement it would seem that the acclamations began with them, and soon became general. We may suppose that the enthusiasm and delight of our Lord's followers had now attained such a height that they could no longer restrain their feelings, but gave them vent in joyful acclamations of adoration, and earnest invocations for God's blessing. *Blessed be the king that cometh, &c.*] Matthew represents the multitude as crying out, "Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh," &c.: Mark's record of this enthusiastic cry is, "Hosanna; blessed is he that cometh—blessed be the kingdom of our father David:" while John's statement is, "Hosanna! blessed is the king of Israel that," &c. It will be seen that there is a close agreement between the relations of Matthew, Mark, and John—indeed, that in *substance* they perfectly accord, though their phraseology slightly differs. Luke, however, is entirely dissimilar in his language, neither employing the Hebrew exclamation, "Hosanna," nor making any mention of Christ as a *Jewish* prince: the reason of which may be, that he avowedly wrote his gospel for the use of Gentile converts, to whom the Jewish forms of expression used by the other evangelists may have been either unintelli-

name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

gible, or offensive. Besides, among such a multitude it is not likely that the shouts of joyous acclamation would always be the same; some would express themselves with slight variations from the others; hence the record of each evangelist may be strictly true, being an account of the vociferations of different persons. "Hosanna" is said to be an abbreviation of two Hebrew words which signify *save* and *now*; the exclamation of "Hosanna to the Son of David," is consequently equivalent to *save now the Son of David*; and may be considered a form of joyful acclamation of similar import to the English patriotic cry of "God save the king." The title "Son of David" is one by which the Jews commonly denoted the Messiah, and must be regarded as an acknowledgment by the disciples and the multitude that Jesus was "the Christ." "Blessed is he that cometh," &c., has probably the same meaning as "Blessed be he," &c., and may be supposed to contain an invocation that Christ's reign might be prosperous and happy. "In the name of the Lord," means by his authority—as sent by him.

The words "he that cometh" are also to be understood as an acknowledgment that Jesus was the Messiah, being a designation by which the Jews often pointed out that distinguished personage. (See Psa. cxviii. 26.) "Hosanna in the highest,"—in the *highest place*, or heaven, is likewise "an address to God in favour of Messiah." By Mark's record, "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David," is probably meant, May the kingdom which God is to erect according to his promise to David be prospered. The "kingdom" referred to in the

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

prophecy was that spiritual dominion which Christ, David's great descendant, was about to erect in the world, and of which a glorious promise of perpetuity is given in Psalm lxxxix. 36. Of its spiritual nature, however, the multitude seem to have had no proper conception. The whole scene appears to have been one of tumultuous joy, occasioned by Christ's emblematic act of riding on the young ass, which so operated on the already strongly excited feelings of the people as to lead them to the conclusion that Jesus was now about to proclaim himself the Messiah, take the throne of David as his right, and establish a glorious earthly dominion. *Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest*] The word "peace" is often used in the Bible in the sense of *prosperity*, or as an embodying of *all good*. The import of this sentence probably is, May prosperity and glory from God attend the Messiah.

It is plausibly suggested by some commentators that among the multitude who at this time accompanied Christ, were some who were now going to Jerusalem to attend the passover; to whom "the people that were with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record" of that fact, as stated by John; (xii. 17, 18 :) who informs us further that it was "for this cause" the people honoured Christ with this triumphal procession, being satisfied by the evidence furnished by that astounding miracle that he was sent of God.

Verses 39, 40. *Some of the Pharisees said, Rebuke thy disciples*] Meaning, reprove them for making such

40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

a noise. Possibly they made this request under the pretence of caring for the public peace, though their real motive for objecting is more likely to have been that the applause was irksome to them, being bestowed on one whom they hated. *He answered, If these should hold their peace, the stones would cry out*] This is supposed to be a proverbial expression, denoting the moral impossibility of a thing to be otherwise than it is. Our Lord's meaning would therefore seem to be, that such was the propriety of, and necessity for, these praises, that they could not be checked; and that even if the people had failed thus to celebrate his triumph, meaner instruments would have been raised up for the purpose. It was, probably, shortly after this that the Pharisees, discouraged by the repulse Jesus gave them, and disheartened by the thronging of the multitude unto him, held the conversation related John xii. 19, saying among themselves, "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him;" which we may consider to be a distinct admission of their inability to arrest the tide of the popular feeling now strongly making in favour of Christ.

Verse 41. *When he was come near, he beheld the city*] Namely, Jerusalem. This city, although built on a steep and rocky hill, is surrounded by other hills, the highest of which is the mount of Olives, above described. The nearest route from Bethany to Jerusalem—the one along which our Lord was now journeying—passes over

this mountain. The traveller sees, of course, nothing of the city until he comes to that part where the road turns round the mountain, and then the view of Jerusalem suddenly bursts upon his sight, and his eyes roam over the streets, and around the walls, as if in the survey of a plan or model of the city. From this spot Jerusalem seems to lie at the feet of the spectator, and withal appears so near, that, as is observed by Dr. Shaw, our Lord might almost in a literal sense be said to have "wept over it." Seen from this part of the mount of Olives this celebrated city makes, even in its present degraded state, a very pleasing appearance; and in the days of its glory, when "a praise in the earth," its lofty "towers," massive "bulwarks," gorgeous "palaces," and above all, its "holy and beautiful house," resplendent in gold, and in marble of snowy whiteness, must have presented a spectacle strikingly adapted to fill the mind of the beholder with admiration and astonishment. But other and sadder things occupied the mind of the Saviour at this time; he thought of the abused privileges of the Jews, the righteous blood which they had shed, the crowning sin by which they were about to fill up the measure of their iniquity, and the terrible overthrow which awaited the city and its guilty inhabitants. *And wept over it, &c.*] That is, wept *on its account*, being greatly afflicted at the doom which awaited the place the Lord had so strongly loved. It was probably while Christ was still on the mount of Olives, with the city and the temple, to the westward, fully in view, that this touching scene, (which is narrated by Luke only,) took place. "How affecting the picture! Jesus is surrounded by an admiring crowd, who rend the air with their shouts of joy. Yet he stops in view of the capital city, and weeps! A king, accom-

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

panied by delighted and enthusiastic friends, yet in tears! But he weeps not for himself, though he well knows that in a few days these shouts of joy will be superseded by the rancorous demands of enemies that he be nailed to a cross, like an impostor and a rebel." "Some over-scrupulous and ill-judging persons of former times, thinking tears unworthy of our Saviour's character, cancelled this verse, insomuch that, as we learn from Epiphanius, these words in his time were not to be found in the generally received manuscripts."—*Bloomfield's Critical Dissert.* What a strange notion! This manifestation of deep commiseration was accompanied by the most circumstantial prediction of the siege and desolation of Jerusalem, anywhere recorded in Scripture.

Verse 42. *If thou hadst known, even thou, &c.]* Rather, as Holden, *O that thou—even thou, with all thy guilt*—"hadst known," or *considered.* *In this thy day]* The word "day," is here used in the sense of time allotted for attention to any specific work; and has, probably, special reference to the period of our Lord's personal ministry, which had been so richly fraught with favourable opportunities for the impious inhabitants to have become reconciled to God. This was especially the "day" of their gracious visitation. *The things which belong unto thy peace]* Or happiness. The "things" referred to were those which pertained to the salvation of the people. The Saviour, overcome, probably, with emotion, appears to have left his sentence unfinished. It is conjectured that such a sense of the favour and happiness the Jerusalemites *might* have enjoyed, if they had

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

“received his words,” and of the misery to which they had exposed themselves by their perverse rejection of his message, burst upon his mind, as oppressed him with the deepest sorrow, and prevented his saying what he would. This is a very plausible supposition; for persons who are excited by deep feeling are apt to speak in a disconnected, abrupt manner, leaving their sentences but partially completed. *But now they are hid, &c.]* Meaning that the various privileges connected with his personal instructions were about to come to an end—to pass away,—and to be as things “hidden:” and that not by any necessitating decree of God, but in consequence of their own wilfulness and obstinacy: for if this ignorance of the “things belonging unto their peace” had been unavoidable, they could not justly be blamed or punished. It was as if Jesus had said, By thine inexcusable ignorance, the result of perverseness, thou hast rejected the rich favours proffered thee, and therefore perish thou must.

Verses 43, 44. *The days shall come, &c.]* This prediction was fulfilled about forty years afterward, when the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. *Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee around, &c.]* By “trench,” here, is not meant a ditch, as is now commonly denoted by that word, but a rampart or wall of earth, supported on the sides and ends by strong piles or stakes driven firmly into the ground so as to keep the mound from sliding. Such was the import of the word “trench,” when our translation was made. Josephus informs us that Titus, the Roman

44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee

commander, caused Jerusalem to be surrounded by such a wall, which was nearly five miles in circumference, and strengthened by thirteen towers: and that the avowed design in erecting it was "to keep the inhabitants in on every side," that their great numbers might the sooner bring them to a state of starvation, and consequently to capitulation. It has been well remarked that the minuteness of this prediction gives our Lord's words rather the distinctness of description than the vagueness of prophecy.

Verse 44. *They shall lay thee even with the ground*] Shall utterly destroy thee. The devastation of the city, after it was taken by Titus, was terrific. Josephus, who was an eye-witness of what he relates, tells us, that when the army was satiated with the plunder and slaughter of the wretched inhabitants, Titus gave them orders "to demolish the entire city and temple, with the exception of the three principal towers, and so much of the walls as enclosed the city on the west side." (Josephus, *Wars*, b. vii, ch. i, § 1.) *And thy children within thee*] That is, thine inhabitants. The destruction of human life in the siege of Jerusalem is, perhaps, without a parallel in history. The siege commenced at a time when multitudes of Jews from other parts of the country had assembled there to celebrate the feast of the passover, so that the supply of provisions was soon exhausted. Famine, pestilence, and internal dissensions commenced, under the most horrible circumstances, that work of destruction the measure of which was filled up by the Roman sword, until, according to Josephus, not less

one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

than eleven hundred thousand persons had perished. *And they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another*] A parallel prediction, having reference, however, only to the temple, may be found in Matt. xxiv. 2. The temple was destroyed by the Romans under Titus; but the prophecy as regards the city did not receive its entire fulfilment at that time, as he left some portions of the wall still standing. The work of destruction was, however, fully completed in after years. "Looking now on the city," observes Mr. Hardy, in his Travels in the Holy Land, "we cannot point out one single building, nor part of a building, that the most zealous antiquarian can suppose to have existed in the time of Christ. Other cities have been sacked, and partially destroyed, but the ruin has not been total. I have seen the Parthenon at Athens, the Coliseum at Rome, and there are temples still standing even at Thebes; *here* rage has done its worst; and there is no present edifice over which the Jews can weep, and say, 'Our fathers reared these walls.'" *Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation*] When God "visited his people" in mercy in the person of the promised Messiah, they would not know him. Jesus "came to his own, but his own received him not." He would have gathered them and protected them "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings; but they would not." Now, therefore, he visits them in judgment. The conduct and fate of the Jews are a warning to all who hear the invitations of the gospel: if they refuse mercy here, they cannot escape judgment hereafter.

45 And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought;

Having delivered this fearful prophecy, our Lord, according to Mark, (xi. 11,) resumed his course toward Jerusalem; and the people by whom he was accompanied renewed their joyous cries. When he had entered, "the whole city," as appears from Saint Matthew, (chap. xxi. 10,) "was moved," that is, strongly agitated, by the vociferations of the multitude, and eagerly inquired, "Who is this?" We may well suppose that the inhabitants would be exercised by a variety of conflicting emotions: some, probably, thinking that the "time, the set time," to favour their beloved Zion had arrived, and that the Prince, the Deliverer of their nation, had indeed come, and was about to rescue them from their oppressors, and elevate them to great earthly distinction; while others, it may be conjectured, would look on in wonder, fear, and disapprobation, according as they were disposed toward Christ or influenced by the Roman power. To the inquiry, "Who is this?" the reply was given, "This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth," meaning, probably, he *who has been known as* "the prophet of Nazareth;" but whom they now manifestly believed to be the Messiah.

Verses 45, 46. *He went into the temple*] That is, into the court of the temple. *Began to cast out them that sold, &c.*] Namely, began to expel them from the *outer court*, commonly called the court of the Gentiles, because converts from Gentilism, and perhaps heathen generally, were permitted to worship there, though precluded entering the inner courts. "Here were sold frankincense, oil, wine, and other requisites for sacrifice,

46 Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.

MATT. xxi. 14-16.

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.

as doves, cattle, &c.; and here the money-changers carried on their traffic. A similar abuse is said to have prevailed in the heathen temples of the Greeks and Romans, from whom, probably, the custom was derived." For further information see vol. i., pp. 54, 218-220. As Christ had turned out these, or other traffickers, once before, namely, in the first year of his ministry, (see on John ii. 15, &c.,) this must have been the second time of his cleansing the temple. We deem it probable that our Lord did not, on this occasion, resort to any physical effort to drive out the "buyers and sellers," but simply reproved them, and ordered them to leave the sacred precincts, and to violate them in like manner no more. See further on Mark xi. 15-17, pp. 62-63. *It is written, My house, &c.*] Meaning, it is recorded, &c., namely, in Isa. lvi. 7. *Ye have made it a den of thieves*] "Thieves," here, means *extortioners* and *cheats*. "The reason why our Lord turned out these persons is thus stated by Kuinoel: 'The noise of the traders disturbed and interrupted those who were worshipping God in the temple: various kinds of dishonesty were practised there: the impositions and fraudulent dealings of the traders produced quarrels and brawls: and thus the temple was profaned; the priests, for the sake of sordid gain, allowing this profanation.'"—*Bloomfield, Crit. Dissert.*

MATT. xxi. 14-16.

Verses 14-16. *The blind and the lame came to him*] The avenues leading to the temple, would, doubtless, be

15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased,

a favourite resort for such of these classes as were in any-wise dependent on public charity for support, because of the vast concourse of people passing through them, particularly at, or about the time of, the great festivals. Learning that Jesus was now at the temple, these blind and lame gathered unto him, that they might be healed. Would that mankind were as solicitous about their spiritual health as they are about their physical! *When the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying, Hosanna, they were sore displeased*] It is plausibly suggested by Mr. Watson, that the "wonderful things" here referred to, are not the miracles of healing above spoken of, but that the reference is chiefly to the *manner* in which Jesus had made his entrance into the city—his public *reception* of the congratulations of the populace—his acting in the temple as though it were *his own house*, which his words implied—and his *expulsion* of the traders therefrom. These would seem to be the "wonderful things" which, in connection with the exultation of the children, excited the anger of the priests and scribes. This view of the matter is supported by the inference that the "hosannas" of the children were not, probably, separate and distinct from the general rejoicings of the multitude, which may be presumed to have been still going on, but merely an accompaniment to the acclaims of the adults: for it is not likely that the children would of themselves resume the cry after the older persons had ceased, though, from their imitative propensities, they would be very likely to

16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say ?
And Jesus saith unto them, Yea ; have ye never read,
Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise ?

join in with the shouts of the older part of the throng, and even to be so much more noisy and active than they as to attract especial attention. Some commentators, however, think the children were acting under a special divine influence, in order to their becoming unconsciously the fulfillers of an inspired prediction.

Verse 16. *Hearest thou what these say ?*] This language seems to convey an insinuation that they, the priests and scribes, deemed it Christ's duty to silence the children, and to refuse the praises which they offered, for that by suffering them to proceed with their gratulations, he practised an imposition on the people, as this language was applicable only to the Messiah, which they, the priests and scribes, did not believe him to be. *Jesus saith, Have ye never read*] Namely, in the eighth psalm, second verse, only a portion of which, however, is here quoted. *Out of the mouths of babes—thou hast perfected praise*] Our rendering of the original whence this quotation is made, is, it will be seen by a reference to Psa. viii. 2, widely different in phraseology, though perhaps not in sense, from the quotation here given. This may be accounted for by the fact that our version of the Old Testament was made directly from the Hebrew, that of the New Testament from the Greek. And as the Septuagint, or Greek version of the Old Testament, renders this clause of Psalm viii. 2, by words signifying "hast perfected praise," instead of "hast ordained strength," the English translators of the New Testament, rendering from the Greek, did so likewise. Our Lord's

JOHN xii. 20-43.

20 And there were certain Greeks among them, that came up to worship at the feast.

answer,—“Yea, have ye never read,” &c., is to be understood not only as an admission that he *heard* the acclamations of the children, but also, and chiefly, as a *defence* of them against the complaints of the priests and scribes.

It is not certain that the prediction in Psa. viii. 2, had reference to these rejoicings of the children, or that it was in any wise fulfilled by them: for as the psalm has special reference to the exaltation of Christ, and the glory which should accrue to God from that event, through the preaching of the gospel, (see 1 Cor. xv. 27; Eph. i. 22; Heb. ii. 8,) it is more than probable that by the expression “babes and sucklings” the apostles and other early ministers of our Lord are primarily intended; to whom, indeed, the former of these appellations was on two occasions applied by our Lord himself. (Matt. xi. 25; Luke x. 21.) “By these weak instruments,” remarks Mr. Watson, “were those results accomplished which brought so much glory to God, and so mightily confounded his ‘enemies.’”

JOHN xii. 20-43.

Verse 20. *Certain Greeks—came up to worship at the feast*] That is, at the feast of the passover, which was now within a few days of being celebrated. There is considerable doubt as to the nation and religion of the persons here termed “Greeks.” Some think them to have been Jews born and educated in a foreign country, and called “Greeks” on account of their speaking the

21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

Greek language, which at that time was more commonly used than was any other tongue. Others maintain that they were *not* foreign Jews, but *Gentiles*, or heathens. This is, indeed, the usual signification of the word "Greeks" in the New Testament, and therefore the ordinary use of language is in its favour. It is said, too, that the heathen were in the habit of worshipping not only the gods of their respective countries, in the temples of their own nation, but also those of any city or nation in which they were residing for the time. But to this exposition it may be objected that these "Greeks" are said to have been of the number of those who had visited Jerusalem *in order to unite in the religious observance of the festival*; and that the heathen were accustomed to do this, or would have been *allowed* to do it, *as heathen*, cannot be proved. A third supposition is therefore put forth by others, to the effect that these "Greeks" were Gentile proselytes:—that is, persons who were born and brought up Gentiles, but who had embraced the Jewish religion. This seems to be the most probable opinion.

Verse 21. *The same came to Philip of Bethsaida, &c.*] This Philip was one of the earlier followers of our blessed Lord, as we learn from John i. 43, having attached himself to Jesus before the latter commenced his public ministry. He is said to have preached the gospel in Scythia and Phrygia, and to have suffered martyrdom at Hierapolis in Phrygia. For a slight notice of "Bethsaida," see on John i. 44, vol. i., pp. 206, 207. *We would see Jesus*] Meaning, doubtless,

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew : and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

we wish to have an interview with him. That this was the true nature of their request appears all but certain from the circumstances of the case. If they merely wished to *look upon* our Lord, they might easily have gratified their curiosity without troubling any of the disciples : but if they wished to *converse* with him, it was reasonable and proper, as entire strangers to his person, that they should seek an introduction through some of his friends. This would be more particularly the case if, as just supposed, they were merely proselytes to the Jewish faith, and not Israelites by birth. Our Lord was, probably, at this time, in the outer court of the temple. It is plausibly suggested by some eminent German commentators, as a reason why these "Greeks" made the request they did, that "they had probably been spectators of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, or had at least heard of it. They were aware that the people regarded him as the promised Messiah, and saluted him as king of Israel. They knew that great was the expectation of all the followers of Christ, that he would establish an earthly kingdom. In the honours and advantages of that kingdom they desired to participate, and therefore anxiously wished to recommend themselves to the notice and favour of Jesus."—*Bloomfield, Crit. Dissert.*

Verse 22. *Philip—telleth Andrew*] Namely, of the request which those "Greeks" had made ; and apparently sought his advice. But why should Philip do this ? Possibly because the applicants may have been known by him to be of heathen origin, in consequence of which he may have been doubtful of the propriety of introducing them to his Lord, and therefore sought the counsel of

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

his townsman. Andrew would seem to have been favourable to admitting them. It does not, however, clearly appear whether their request was granted or not; though the probability is, that it was, and that the following discourse was addressed chiefly to them. The "Andrew" here spoken of was brother to Simon Peter, and also one of Christ's earliest followers. Tradition says, that after the downfall of the Jewish nation he preached the gospel in Scythia, and came to his end by martyrdom at Patræ, in Achaia.

Verse 23. *Jesus answered them*] Namely, Andrew and Philip, and also, perhaps, the "Greeks." *The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified*] By "the hour is come" is meant that *the time* when "the Son of man should be glorified," or exalted to high honour and dignity, is *at hand*. The phrase is commonly used to denote the period *about which* any determined occurrence is to be accomplished, and should not be construed in a strictly literal sense, as the *very hour* in which it should be fulfilled. Considerable diversity of opinion prevails as to what particular event, if any, our Lord refers as that by which he should be "glorified." Some commentators, referring the expression to the application of these "Greeks," understand him to say that "the time was at hand" when he should be "glorified" by being believed on as the Redeemer of mankind, not by a few individuals merely, but in the world generally. Others refer the term "glorified" here to Christ's *death*, and argue that it was by this event he was most signally honoured, because it was *through his death* that he came to be so extensively believed on: in support of this

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of opinion they adduce the declaration contained in verse twenty-four—"Except a corn of wheat *die*," &c. But do not both these views fall short of the truth? We think they do; for though it is true that in order to the redemption and regeneration of mankind, and the glorification of Christ, it was necessary that Jesus should *die*; it is no less true, that unless he had risen from that state of death, and ascended up on high to appear in the presence of God for us, the work of human salvation would have been incomplete, the influences of the Holy Ghost might have been less copiously bestowed, and the "Son of man" have failed to be suitably "glorified." Besides, the Scriptures represent Christ's "glory" to consist specially in his resurrection, and exaltation to that high excellence which he enjoys as the "one Mediator between God and man," whereby he has become "head over all things to the church." It is therefore probable, that by "glorified," here, we are to understand our Lord as intimating his speedy advancement to that state of distinguished honour he now enjoys. The entrance to this glory was, however, through the grave; as is more than intimated in the verse following.

Verse 24. *Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone*] By "*corn of wheat*," here, is meant the kernel or grain of wheat: which being cast into ground suitably prepared for its reception, the greater part, after a while, *decomposes*, or, as it is here expressed, "*dies*," and becomes the first nourishment of the germe, or new plant, which springs from it. "In the body of the seed," says Paley, "provision is made for two grand purposes,—the safety of the germe, and the temporary support of the future plant. The

wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that

sprout, as folded up in the seed, is delicate and brittle beyond any other substance. It cannot be touched without being broken. Yet it is so shut up and protected, that while the seed itself is rudely handled, tossed into sacks, shovelled into heaps, the miniature plant remains unhurt. Then, as to the temporary support of the future plant, the matter stands thus. In grain the germe composes a very small part of the seed. The rest consists of a nutritious substance, from which the sprout draws its aliment until able to imbibe juices from the earth in a sufficient quantity for its demand."

"Abideth alone," means, remains unproductive. *But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit*] That is, such is the ordinary result. The surprising fruitfulness of this "corn" is strikingly exhibited in the following remarks by Dr. Clarke. He says, "I planted *three* grains of wheat on the 10th of June, 1816, which by the 28th of August had produced one hundred and fifty shoots. Some of these died, and on the 18th of October I took up the rest, and found that they had increased to six hundred and fifty-eight perfect shoots. These, by the next spring, had multiplied themselves into one thousand eight hundred and sixteen perfect plants. The result of this experiment, if fully carried out, would have been six hundred thousand fold." Well might the Saviour say, "It bringeth forth much fruit!" So, also, the Lord Jesus, through his death, has brought, is now bringing, and will yet bring, "many sons unto glory."

Verses 25, 26. These verses seem to be closely connected with the one preceding. Jesus had just been

hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where

speaking of his approaching sufferings; he now intimates that all who would enjoy the benefits arising from these sufferings must be willing for his sake to undergo afflictions and death. *He that loveth his life, &c.*] That is, as is shown by the words which follow, so loves his *present life* as to esteem its preservation beyond his future life, and consequently beyond his duty to God, *shall lose* his life eternally. *He that hateth, &c.*] The word "hateth" is not to be here taken in a literal sense, for "no man ever yet hated his own flesh," Eph. v. 29; the expression merely denotes, *loveth less*: he who loveth his "life in this world" less than his life in the world to come, "shall keep," or secure, "eternal life." The loving "life in this world" less than eternal felicity, argues living faith in God, which will of course prompt its possessor to such acts of love and obedience as cannot fail to secure to him the approval of Heaven, and an "inheritance among them which are sanctified." *If any man serve me*] Or, *would serve*:—meaning, would become Christ's disciple. *Let him follow me*] That is, "follow," or practise our Lord's directions, namely, in voluntarily submitting to affliction and death from a principle of love and obedience to him, rather than avoid these present evils by disobeying his injunctions. This is not always implied in the exhortation to "follow Christ," but the scope of the present passage seems to require our Lord's words to be understood in this sense. See also Matt. x. 38; John viii. 12. Then, as an encouragement to this complete devotion, our Lord adds, *And where I am*] Meaning, "where I am about to take up

I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will *my* Father honour.

27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?

my abode," (*Doddridge*,)—in heaven. *There shall my servant be*] Namely, *the servant* who thus exemplifies his attachment to Christ by preferring temporal death to dishonouring him, or who would thus demonstrate it, if providentially called to the trial, shall be there as a participator in his Master's glory.

Some commentators suppose that by the phrase "where I am," the Saviour meant to intimate his omnipresence; that he was *then*, as God, in heaven. Others believe the *present* tense to be here used for the *future*, and that the words mean, *where I shall be*. For similar forms of speech see chap. xiv. 3; xvii. 24. The latter is the more natural, and doubtless the correct interpretation: for though it is true that Christ, in his strictly divine essence, was at this time, as at every antecedent period, *in heaven*; it is very certain that he would not be understood by his hearers as stating that fact, (inasmuch as it had no connection with his subject,) but as referring to the union which should hereafter exist between himself and his servant in the state of future felicity which he had just alluded to under the notion of "eternal life." *Him will my Father honour*] Or *reward*: so Campbell renders. Bloomfield says, "Him will my Father reward with a crown of glory."

Verses 27, 28. *Now is my soul troubled*] Namely, in view of his approaching sufferings. The allusion already made by Christ to his death, seems to have brought before him all its fearful agonies; and to have filled him with unutterable anguish. This shows that our blessed Lord was not insensible to pain, and that he did not

Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice

affect a cold indifference to it. In assuming man's nature, he became subject to its innocent infirmities. It was not, however, the mere fear of death that thus oppressed our Saviour, but the dread of that mysterious and awful mental or spiritual suffering he was to undergo as the victim appointed to bear, vicariously, the penalty of a violated law. *And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour*] That is, from the sufferings connected with his agony and death. The common punctuation of this passage is doubtless incorrect, being at variance with the pointing of many of the best critics and commentators, and contrary to our Lord's evident purpose. As the passage is ordinarily read, it contains a prayer, on our Lord's part, to be exempted from the death he had uniformly declared he would undergo; whereas he merely raises the question (being greatly oppressed in spirit) whether or not he should ask to be delivered from the impending evil:—"What shall I say? [Shall I say] Father, save me from this hour?"—*Campbell, Bloomfield, and others. But for this cause came I, &c.*] This clause may be understood to contain not only a statement of the *object* of Christ's coming, but also an answer to the preceding question, as though he had said, Shall I ask to be delivered from this hour? No, for "for this cause came I," &c. The design of Christ's coming into the world was, that he might suffer and die for the redemption of mankind. Heb. ii. 9. *Glorify thy name*] Meaning, *Glorify thyself*; namely, by rendering conspicuous and glorious the divine character and attributes.—*Rob.* This exclamation furnishes strong proof of

from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it,

Christ's entire acquiescence in the will of the Father, and of his ardent desire for the promotion of his glory, at whatever cost to himself. The sentence has an intimate connection with the preceding verse. *Then came a voice, &c.*] Twice before had testimony been given to Jesus by "a voice from heaven;" namely, at his baptism, (Matt. iii. 17,) and at his transfiguration, Mark ix. 7; 2 Pet. i. 17. "One of the ancient tokens of the more immediate or more manifested presence of God," says Rev. Mr. Townsend, "was the utterance of an audible voice from heaven, in the manner here described. See Exod. xix. 19; 1 Sam. iii. 5. This voice was called by the later Jews, the *Bath Col*, or, the daughter of the voice."* *I have both glorified it, and will again*] The "it" here, refers to the "name," or person of God, who had already been glorified in the teachings and miracles of Jesus, whereby the benevolence, wisdom, and power of God had been remarkably exemplified. Those acts by which he would again "glorify his name" may be understood of the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, and the diffusion of the gospel among men. It is in the gospel that the divine character is most clearly exhibited and illustrated.

Verse 29. *The people that heard it, said it thundered*] That is, *some* of them said so. Possibly the "voice"

* The learned Spencer says that the "Bath Col" was a voice which proceeded from heaven by the ministry of an angel: it was so called because the voice was generally attended with thunder, from which it usually seemed to proceed, as from the womb of its mother.

said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

was either preceded or followed by thunder, or both, thus marking its supernatural character; and these persons, being inattentive to the voice, failed to distinguish between it and the thunder by which it was attended. *Others said, An angel spake to him*] This is spoken agreeably to the opinion prevalent among the Jews, that God, in his intercourse with men, almost invariably employed the ministry of angels. See Heb. ii. 2; Gal. iii. 19. The difference of opinion existing among the people makes not against the reality of the voice, for it is hardly to be supposed that all would accurately distinguish between it and the thunder which may have accompanied, any more than that all should have distinctly heard the words; but the statement of the difference strengthens the credibility of the narrative, as it proves the candour of the historian.

Verse 30. *Jesus said, This voice came not because of me*] These words, taken in connection with verse 28, show that there was no illusion in the case, but that a *real* voice and distinct expressions were heard; for, 1st., the very words which were spoken are mentioned; 2d., the Saviour positively affirms it to be a "voice," and that not in a figurative sense, but plainly in the ordinary acceptance of the term. The declaration, "this voice came not *because of me*," means that it was not given for his satisfaction or encouragement, but *for the confirmation of their faith in him*. Doubtless, this open miraculous manifestation of God's favour *was* a source of encouragement and comfort to the man Christ Jesus,

31 Now is the judgment of this world : now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

and tended to strengthen him for the drinking of that bitter cup which had been prepared for him ; but this was not the chief design for which it was sent. It is plausibly suggested by Dr. A. Clarke that Christ was now addressing himself to the "Greeks." "The Jews," says he, "had frequent opportunities of seeing his miracles, and of being convinced that he was the Messiah ; but these Greeks, who were to be a first fruits of the *Gentiles*, had never any such opportunity. For their sakes, therefore,—to confirm *them* in the faith,—this miraculous voice appears to have come from heaven."

Verse 31. *Now is the judgment of this world*] Meaning, probably, that now should its wicked dispositions and practices—or rather, the wicked dispositions and practices of the *men* of this world, meaning thereby the adversaries of Christ—be condemned in the light of that purer morality which should speedily be introduced by his gospel ; and a just and clear discrimination be made between the righteous and the unrighteous. So far the sentiment seems parallel with that expressed in John ix. 39. *Now shall the prince of this world be cast out*] By "prince of this world," we understand Satan to be meant ; and conceive him to be so termed because he rules in the hearts of wicked and worldly men. Eph. ii. 2 ; 2 Cor. iv. 4. By being "cast out," is meant, deposed from rule. The Saviour is not, however, to be understood as saying that Satan's reign over men should be entirely destroyed from that time, but that it should thenceforth begin to decline, and continue to fail before the aggressions of his great antagonist.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me.

33 (This he said, signifying what death he should die.)

Verse 32. *And I, if I be lifted up, &c.*] Rather, "*when* I am lifted up," for there was no uncertainty in Christ's mind as to the manner of his death. See verse 33, Matt. xx. 19. The original, also, has the sense of "when."—*Rob.* The words "lifted up" are allowed to have been spoken with special reference to Christ's crucifixion, though it is not certain they were so understood; they also connect with the idea of his crucifixion that of his *exaltation to glory*. (So Bloomfield and Robinson.) This exposition is strengthened by the fact that not until after our Lord's ascension was there any remarkable ingathering to the church. *Will draw all men unto me*] The word rendered "draw" is sometimes used in the sense of *drag* or *force away*, as in Acts xvi. 19; xxi. 30, and elsewhere. In other places it is employed as here, in the sense of *allure* or *impel*, namely by the presentation of suitable motives and the impartation of supernatural assistance; yet not so to *impel* as irresistibly to influence men: the only kind of force employed being that which results from the convictions produced by truth and the helps of divine grace. The means by which this is effected is the operation of the Spirit of God upon the mind and heart. The words "all men" are not to be construed as implying that "all men" should be so drawn to Christ as to become his followers, but either as denoting merely that *great multitudes* would believe in him, (and that the words "all" and "every" are occasionally used in this restricted sense, see Matt. iii. 5, Luke xvi. 16,) or else, that he would offer inducements to "all men" to believe on him, by tendering to

34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest

them the benefits of his sacrifice. The latter seems the better view.

From the apparently close connection existing between the thirty-first and thirty-second verses, it is not improbable that our Lord meant to institute a comparison between the decline of Satan's kingdom, and the progressive increase of his own. If so, the words "I will draw," &c., imply that he would draw them from the interests and allegiance of the "prince of this world," and convert those very men to his own interests, and to become his own friends. Thus to him would "the gathering of the people be."

Verse 34. *The people answered*] That is, some of the Jews answered. *We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever*] By "law," here, the books of the Old Testament are meant, as at ch. x. 34. In saying they had "heard" thus, they probably meant that such was the interpretation they had heard their teachers give of the passages referred to, which interpretation they believed to be correct. "Christ abideth for ever," means, *remaineth on earth for ever*—that is, to the end of time. There are numerous passages in the prophets (as Psalm cx. 4; Isa. ix. 7; Dan. vii. 14) which speak of the perpetual duration of Christ and his rule. With these passages the Jews seem to have been very familiar, as they frequently adduced them in proof of the glorious perpetual dominion of the Messiah; but they either entirely overlooked or misapplied those texts which speak of his sufferings and death. Such are Isaiah liii. 4-12; Daniel ix. 24-27. The Scriptures may thus by a partial or one-sided view, be abused to subserve the cause of infidelity;

thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

how careful, then, ought men to be to take the blessed volume as a whole. *How sayest thou the Son of man must be lifted up*] From this indifferent use by the Jews of the words "Christ" and "Son of man," it is plain that the terms were regarded by them as being equally applicable to the Messiah; and from their present employment it is equally clear that they *took for granted* that Jesus was that Messiah. "The commentators, however, are wrong in supposing that by 'lifted up' the people understood him to speak of *crucifixion*. It would seem that not even the apostles comprehended the import of what was said, which was only meant as a *dark prediction*, to be *understood after the event*, for the confirmation of their faith. The multitude, as appears from what follows, understood the expression, 'lifted up from the earth,' only of removal from earth to heaven, whether by death, or otherwise, as in the case of Elijah."—*Bloomfield*. *What is this Son of man*] Rather, "What sort of 'Son of man' [or Messiah] is that?" (*Benson and Bloomfield*;) plainly intimating that if he were to be "lifted up" he could not be the Messiah. We have here distinctly brought out the great difficulty which kept these Jews from believing Jesus to be the Christ. *They* expected one whose reign would be visible, earthly, and perpetual; *he* taught that his kingdom* would be invisible and spiritual, and that his bodily presence would soon be removed from among them.

The reader's attention is solicited to the following remarks from A. Clarke: "The prophets, as well as the evangelists and apostles, speak sometimes of the *divine*,

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light, lest dark-

sometimes of the *human* nature of Christ: and those who do not make proper distinctions between them, will ever make blunders as well as the Jews. It is only on the ground of *two natures* in Christ that the scriptures which speak of him, either in the Old or New Testament, can be possibly understood. No position in the gospel is plainer than this, *God* was manifest in the *flesh*."

Verses 35, 36. *Yet a little while is the light with you*] These and the following words seem to be an indirect reply to the question of the Jews; and may have been designed to intimate both that their conceptions of the Messiah were erroneous, and that their opportunity for forming a more just estimate of his character and of the nature of his kingdom would soon pass away. It may also imply that he was the author and dispenser of "light" or knowledge; and that they could only attain to truth by receiving his doctrines. *Walk while ye have the light, &c.*] That is, improve the time during which I remain with you, as men ordinarily improve the light of day to the common purposes of life. By "walk," &c., is meant, *believe on*, as is clearly stated in verse 36. *Lest darkness come upon you*] Meaning, lest calamity suddenly seize you. Such is the force of the original. And how dire were the evils that befell them in the invasion of the Romans, especially under Titus! "Darkness" is a frequent emblem of ignorance and guilt, and of the wretchedness growing out of them. *He that walketh in darkness knoweth not, &c.*] Knows not "*how to direct his steps*." The literal sense is here used to illustrate the preceding figure; as though our Lord had said, As one who is travelling in a dark night is in con-

ness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

stant danger of mistaking his way and of falling into difficulty, so you, if you follow not my instructions, will, under the influence of erroneous views, sink into misery. *Children of light*] This idiom is frequently used in the Scriptures to denote character; as "children of wrath," Eph. ii. 3; meaning thereby persons worthy of, and consequently exposed to, wrath or punishment; "children of transgression," (Isa. lvii. 4,) for children who transgress, &c. It would thus appear that by "children of light" are meant those who enjoy the knowledge of Christ or of his salvation. *These things spake Jesus, and departed*] Having spoken "these things," he departed. *Did hide himself*] Campbell renders, *withdrew himself privately*, the original simply denoting that Jesus, in retiring, took care not to be observed by the people.

What follows, to the end of the chapter, contains the opinion and judgment of St. John on the *event* of Christ's teaching, so much less successful than might have been expected; together with a summary of his doctrines. The evangelist seems to conclude that *neither* could induce the Jews to believe in Christ.

Verses 37, 38. *Though he had done so many miracles before them, they believed not*] St. John does not here intimate that Christ had performed any miracles on the occasion just noticed; his reference is to those which Jesus had previously wrought. So also the words "them" and "they" are to be understood, not of the company

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

whom our Lord had just addressed, but of the great body of the nation. *That the saying of Esaias might be fulfilled*] Rather, "*So that, or wherefore, the word of the prophet was fulfilled,*" namely, by this event, though the event was not produced *in order to* the fulfilment of the prediction; for, as Mr. Holden expresses it, "their unbelief did not happen because it was foretold, but it was foretold because it was foreseen that it would happen." Their unbelief was neither occasioned by, nor designed to be a fulfilment of, the prophecy; but was entirely independent of it. *Who have believed our report, &c.*] Meaning, that but few had believed it; for the question form is but an emphatic manner of making such an assertion. By "report" is meant, *speech, testimony*. The phrase "arm of the Lord" is a striking figure for the power of God; (see Deut. v. 15; Isa. li. 9;) and by its being "revealed" is here meant, *made known, manifested*,—namely, in the deliverance of the people from the unbelief and sinful practices which bound them. See Isa. lii. 10.

Verse 39. *Therefore they could not believe*] Because the instructions and miracles of Christ had been rejected, "therefore," or *for this reason*, "they could not believe." This inability must, of course, be understood of a *moral* inability—they *could not*, because they *would not*: or because they entertained views and feelings which rendered it morally impossible for them to believe, so long

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

as they continued to entertain those views and feelings. Thus, in Gen. xxxvii. 4, we read that the brethren of Joseph "could not speak peaceably to him:" why? because "they hated him;" and so long as this disposition of hatred reigned in their bosoms, it would prevent their being at peace with him. That Isaiah's prophecy could not have in any wise influenced the conduct of these unbelieving Jews, is furthermore clear from the fact that it was simply a prediction, and therefore imposed no necessity on them to resist the offers of mercy. "Prophetic threatenings," says Mr. Watson, "are not absolute; but imply conditions:" and he then refers to Jer. xviii. 7, 8, as proof:—"At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them."—*Institutes*, vol. ii, p. 373. *Because Esaias said again*] Rather, "*according* to what Isaiah said again, or elsewhere,"—(*Wesley*,) (namely, chap. vi, 10, &c.) "This passage of Isaiah," says Bloomfield, "is used thrice in the New Testament to prove the same thing; (as in Matt. xiii. 14; Acts xxviii. 26; and in the present passage;) but with a remarkable variation in *words*, though not in *sense*. In Isaiah it is, 'Make this people's heart fat, make their ears heavy,' &c. Here Isaiah is told to go and blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the people: the interpretation of which words involves some difficulty. Now, in all ancient languages, especially the Hebrew, any one

41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

is often said to do any thing who tells, narrates, and shows a thing to be, or be done; and thus verbs active are [in such cases] to be understood *declaratively*. The meaning, therefore, is this: 'Go show and *declare* to the people that their heart *is* heavy,' &c.; which is equivalent to, 'The people's heart is gross,' &c.: and so the Septuagint have expressed it, and have been followed by Christ and Paul." But St. John reads the passage, "He hath blinded," &c.: which, according to the hypothesis above given, would mean, "He hath *declared* their eyes to be blinded," &c.,—namely, by their own act. Another exposition of this and similar passages is, that God is oftentimes represented as doing that which he only suffers to be done, or which results remotely and indirectly from his action.

Verse 41. *These things said Esaias when he saw his glory, &c.*] The event here referred to is evidently the vision recorded by Isaiah in his sixth chapter. He there tells us, (verse 1,) that he saw JEHOVAH—"the LORD"—sitting on his throne, surrounded by a host of attending spirits, and received command from him to deliver to the Jews the message already noticed. This appellation, "Jehovah," is admitted, on all hands, to be a designation of God the Father. But what Isaiah declares of "Jehovah" St. John here applies to Christ; for the sense requires the words, "saw his glory and spake of him," to be understood of Jesus. Here, then, the "incommunicable" and peculiar designation of the Most High, is given to our blessed Lord, who must, consequently, be God. It is not, perhaps, out of place here to state that St. Paul, speaking of this very vision, (Acts xxviii. 25,) ascribes to

42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him ; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue :

43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

the Holy Ghost the language which Isaiah attributes to Jehovah, and St. John to Christ ; whence we infer, also, the essential divinity of the Spirit, and the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for evermore.

Verses 42, 43. These verses seem to be closely connected with verse 37, and to form the conclusion of the statement there introduced. If so, verses 38-41 are to be regarded as parenthetical. *Nevertheless*] That is, notwithstanding the general infidelity of the people, as shown verse 37. *Among the rulers also many believed, &c.*] A clearer translation would be, "many *even* of the rulers believed ;" for the evangelist is *contrasting* the conviction of these "chief rulers" that Jesus was the Christ, with the unbelief of the people generally. Mr. Wesley so renders. *But—did not confess him*] That is, did not profess faith in him, or rank themselves among his followers. *Lest they should be put out of the synagogue*] Or cut off from being members of the Jewish church ; namely, by those Pharisees, "because of," or *through fear of*, whom, they dared not to espouse Christ's cause. The Pharisees were highly revered, and had long enjoyed great influence in the national councils. Being, as a body, bitter opponents of our Lord, they failed not to use their influence to arrest the progress of his cause, and had some time before this succeeded in procuring a decree by the Sanhedrim, that "if any man did confess Jesus to be the Christ he should be put out

44 Jesus cried, and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

of the synagogue," John ix. 22. *They loved the praise of men, &c.*] This is spoken of the "rulers" who are said to have "believed." By the phrase "praise of men," here, we are probably to understand the *good opinion* of men; they so valued the regards of their fellows, that they could not bring themselves to acknowledge Jesus, since this would lower them in their estimation. From this it would seem, that John's assertion of their belief in Jesus is to be understood as a mere declaration that they were *convinced* in their understanding he was the Messiah, but which conviction failed to produce in them Scriptural faith; for they could not believe, in this higher sense, so long as they "loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." See ch. v. 44. "They had that kind of faith," says Mr. Barnes, "which is so common among men—a speculative acknowledgment that religion is true, but an acknowledgment which leads to no self-denial, which shrinks from the active duties of piety, and fears man more than God. *True* faith is active. It overcomes the fear of man. Nevertheless, it was no unimportant proof that Jesus was the Messiah, that *any part* of the great council of the Jews were even speculatively convinced of it. And it shows that the evidence could not have been slight when it overcame their prejudices and pride, and constrained them to admit, [even to themselves,] that the lowly and despised Nazarene was the long-expected Messiah."

Verses 44, 45. *Jesus—said, &c.*] Here commences the *second* part of St. John's discourse, containing a brief summary of the principal *doctrines* taught by Jesus.

45 And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

In presenting these doctrines the evangelist has seen proper to speak in the first person singular, and to represent them as proceeding immediately from the lips of Christ. And this he might well do, as our Lord is known to have uttered these very sentiments, though not, perhaps, in exactly the same language. See chap. v. 23; compare also chap. v. 24 with vi. 40, 47. Besides, John may have *known* that Jesus had employed *the very terms* here used; for it is not to be supposed that the evangelists have presented us with all his discourses. John's design in presenting this summary of doctrine seems to be, to show that our Lord had, in his teachings, publicly and clearly intimated his real character, and the advantage of believing on him; yet notwithstanding this, the Jews had obstinately refused their faith to his *instructions* as well as to his *miracles*.

He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, &c.] That is, not on him *merely*, but also on "*him that sent*" him. A little reflection will satisfy any candid mind of the truth of the statement here made: for as Jesus professed himself to be sent by God to prepare and make known to lost men the way of salvation, and demonstrated, by a variety of miracles, the truth of his profession, it follows that he who believeth on Christ believeth also on him that sent him. Besides, Christ and the Father "are one." Chap. x. 30. *He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me]* This *seeing* can neither be understood of bodily vision nor of Christ's bodily presence; for, 1st. "God is a Spirit," (John iv. 24,) destitute of outward form; 2d. Those of us who "see God," behold him not by natural vision, but by faith. The reference must therefore be to *spiritual* perception, and

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

implies not so much the *seeing* Christ and God as the *knowing* them. But in order to a spiritual perception of God, a man must be a believer in him, and have his mind illuminated by the Holy Ghost; (1 Cor. ii. 10;) for "the *natural* man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: neither can he know them, because they are *spiritually* discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14. It thus appears that this [the 45th] verse is not only intimately connected with the preceding one, but that the declaration contained in it is an advance in the argument, showing that not only does the believer on Christ believe also on "him that sent him," but further, that he attains to a real knowledge of God. The expression in verse 45 is also a stronger indication of the *oneness* of God, though existing in a plurality of persons, than that contained in the clause preceding.

Verse 46. *I am—a light, &c.*] So Jesus had before declared: John viii. 12. Do not these words connect with the preceding, and import that the spiritual perception, or knowledge, of God, which the believer enjoys, proceeds from Christ as the spiritual instructor of men? That he *is*, in this sense, the believer's *light*, is an indisputable fact; (Acts xiii. 47;) and it would seem that the evangelist's object in making the statement here recorded was, primarily, to declare this truth. It may be, that the expression is also to be taken in a figurative sense, denoting that Jesus had come into the world to bestow happiness. Possibly, John may also have regarded this remark as equivalent to a declaration of Christ's divinity. That he was divine would indeed follow from his being the source of spiritual illumination

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words,

and blessedness. See note on John viii. 12, vol. ii, pp. 36, 37. *That whosoever believeth should not abide* (or continue) *in darkness*] "Darkness," here, may either be understood in the sense of positive ignorance of God and of his requirements, or of the sin and misery consequent on a state of alienation from him. The text clearly implies that all men are naturally in this state of "darkness;" but Christ came that they might not continue in it, but "have the light of life," (John viii. 12,) by believing on him.

Verse 47. *If any hear, and believe not, I judge him not*] Meaning, perhaps, I judge (or condemn, for so the original is frequently rendered) him not *now*. Some commentators, however, understand these words not so much of the *act*, as of the *ground*, of condemnation: as though Christ had said, "If any man hear my words and believe not, and so bring destruction on himself, I am not the author of his condemnation; for that is attributable to his unbelief." The original, Tittman remarks, "not only denotes to judge or condemn, but expresses the *effect* of judgment or condemnation—namely, *ruin and destruction*." *For I came not to judge, but save*] Such being our Lord's benevolent *intent*, and the means adopted to bring about the event being well calculated to secure the object, the failure of any to attain salvation is not chargeable to him. For the publication, by Christ, of sentiments similar to those here ascribed to him by the evangelist, see John iii. 17 and v. 45.

Verse 48. *He that rejecteth me, &c.*] The word here

hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting.

rendered "rejecteth" is elsewhere translated, as in Luke x. 16, *despise*. *Hath one that judgeth him*] "The word *one*, here," remarks Professor Ripley, "does not relate to a person, but to the term *word*, which follows. The idea would be better expressed by the term *that*. The thought would then be expressed in a manner somewhat like the following:—'Whoso rejecteth me, and receiveth not my instructions, hath that which will condemn him to misery.'" *The word that I have spoken shall judge him*] Meaning, probably, he would be judged in accordance with Christ's doctrine. We thus learn that inattention to, and wilful neglect of, our Lord's instructions and commands, will bring upon the offender condemnation and punishment.

Verses 49, 50. *For I have not spoken of myself, &c.*] This Christ had, in substance, repeatedly declared. See John v. 79; vii. 16-19; viii. 28, 38. The import of the passage is, that in the instructions he had given, he had not spoken by his own authority merely, but by the divine warrant. He had, as the Messiah, received his instructions from the Father, and published only what had been enjoined on him. John vii. 16, vol. ii, p. 13. *What I should say, and what I should speak*] Rather, "what I should *enjoin*, and what I should *teach*."—*Campbell*. This expositor thinks that the original makes a distinction which the English translation fails to exhibit. He understands the former phrase as having respect

ing: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

to the *precepts* of Christ's religion; the latter, to its *principles*. *I know that his commandment is life everlasting*] Meaning, that obedience to the commandment would be rewarded with "life everlasting." *Whatsoever I speak, therefore, &c.*] That is, because he was sensible the doctrines and precepts which the Father had commissioned him to publish were the only conditions of eternal life, he did not hesitate to make them known.

In these two verses (49, 50) Jesus is represented as making three declarations:—1st. That he had not invented the doctrines he preached, but had received them, as the *Messiah*, from the Father. 2d. He testifies his thorough persuasion that those things which were committed to him to be delivered, had no other end but the eternal salvation of men. 3d. That he had confined his teaching to the expressed will of his Father; neither adding nor suppressing aught; and that therefore his doctrine was pure, complete, and altogether divine.—*Tittman*, as quoted by *Bloomfield*.

On leaving the temple, as stated John xii. 36, Matthew and Mark inform us that our Lord and the twelve disciples returned to Bethany, where they passed the night. Mark xi. 11; Matt. xxi. 17. Mark says they left at "eventide," or sunset. This, it will be remembered, was the evening of the tenth of Nisan, the fourth day before the crucifixion. On this day, according to the Mosaic law, (Exod. xii. 3, 6,) the lamb that was to be eaten at the paschal supper was to be taken and set apart. It is true that Maimonides and others enumerate this requisition among the *special* circumstances attend-

ant on the first passover;—such as the eating it in haste, in the garb of travellers, and the like: but even allowing this, if that paschal lamb, thus selected and consecrated on the tenth of Nisan, was a type of Christ, (and that it was so is expressly asserted 1 Cor. v. 7,) is it not reasonable to conclude that there was something more than mere accident in our Lord's presenting himself at the temple on this day? Was it not that the conformity between the type and the antitype might be preserved, and the thing prefigured by the one find its due fulfilment in the other? If so, then did the blessed Jesus emphatically present himself on this day to God, as that true sacrifice for sin—now about to be offered—of which the paschal lamb was so eminent a type.

“ Our Passover was slain
At Salem's hallow'd place,
Yet we who in our tents remain
Shall gain his largest grace.

This eucharistic feast
Our every want supplies,
And still we by his death are blest,
And share his sacrifice;
By faith his flesh we eat,
Who here his passion show,
And God out of his holy seat
Shall all his gifts bestow.”

LESSON II.

[A. D. 29.]

Christ, on his way from Bethany to Jerusalem, curses the barren fig-tree—Arrived at the temple, he again drives out the buyers and sellers—The scribes and chief priests plot his destruction—He returns in the evening to Bethany—Repairs next morning to Jerusalem, and on his attention being called to the withered state of the fig-tree he had cursed the day before, he exhorts his disciples to faith in God and the forgiveness of trespasses.—Matthew xxi. 18–22; Mark xi. 12–26; Luke xix. 47, 48.

MARK xi. 12–26.

AND on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry :

NOTES ON MARK xi. 12–26.

Verse 12. *On the morrow*] The day after our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. *When they* (Christ and his apostles) *were come from Bethany*] Where they had "lodged." Matt. xxi. 17. *He was hungered*] Probably not having eaten that morning, or the night previous. Jesus was now on some part of the mount of Olives, on his way to Jerusalem, (Matt. xxi. 18; Mark xi. 11,) from which city Bethany was less than two miles distant. The original imports that the time of day was early in the morning—probably *before*, and certainly *not after*, the first hour of the day, or six o'clock.—*Greswell*. For evidence that our Lord was accustomed to be early employed in his appropriate work, see Luke xxi. 38; John viii. 2. What a rebuke to slothful Christians—especially ministers!

13 And seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and

Verse 13. *Seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon*] That is, might find figs on it, with which he would satisfy his hunger. We are not to suppose that our Lord was in any expectation of finding fruit on this tree, though he saw proper to act *as if he did*, and as any reasonable person would have acted in the same circumstances. He may have done this in order to impress the more deeply upon the minds of the disciples the significant miracle which followed. The words rendered "if haply" have the sense of *if indeed*, or *if perhaps*, and may be understood as denoting, not any expectation on the part of the Saviour, but simply the reason why, in the evangelist's estimation, he approached the tree. Considerable stress is laid by the sacred historian on the fact that the tree "*had leaves*." That the reader may see the reason of this, it is needful to remark, that one characteristic of the fig-tree is, that it puts forth its fruit before its leaves. Hence, *having leaves*, the tree ought to have had figs also, and that in a state of considerable forwardness, for in favourable situations it was now almost time for their ripening. *When he came, he found nothing but leaves, for the time of figs was not yet*] By the expression, "the time of figs was not yet," is meant, not that it was not time for figs to form, for, as above stated, they are put forth before the leaves; but, that the *time of gathering* them had not yet arrived. This view is corroborated by Matt. xxi. 34, which see. The fact, then, that the tree had leaves, taken in connection with the circumstance that the time to gather the fruit had not yet arrived, (it was now only about the first of April,)

when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not *yet*.

furnishes abundant reason why fruit might have been expected, and fully proves the barrenness of the tree. The sense of this passage would be rendered much more apparent by the transposition of the clause "for the time of figs was not yet," so that it might be read in immediate connection with the words to which it properly belongs, thus:—"And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon, *for the time of figs was not yet*: and when he came to it he found nothing but leaves."* The words "afar off" are not, we think, to be construed as implying that the tree stood "afar off" from the public road on which Christ was now travelling; but rather, that he *from afar* saw the tree; that is, saw it some time before he arrived at the spot where it grew, and marked, even at that distance, its vigorous, fruitful appearance. St. Matthew says expressly, that it was "in the way," or road,—that is, by the road side, and consequently public property. But even if this were not its situation, and it had been private property in the strictest sense, it would have been no violation of the law to have turned aside and plucked figs for present use, inasmuch as this privilege was extended to travellers by divine authority. See Deut. xxiii. 24, 25.

It may not be out of place to add, that "the *figus*

* For a similar instance of the disjunction of parts of a sentence, in the writings of this same evangelist, see Mark xvi. 3, 4: "They said, Who shall roll us away the stone from the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that it was rolled away, *for it was very great*." It is evident that the words, "for it was very great," should immediately follow the question, of which they are the reason. The verse would then be perfectly intelligible.

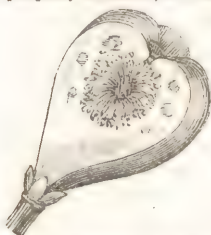


The common Fig tree.

carica, or common fig tree, is a native of Asia, Africa, and the south of Europe. It rises to the height of from fifteen to twenty-five feet, and throws out numerous long, twisted, and pliant branches. It ought further to be observed, that, in climates suited to its growth, the fig-tree generally yields two, and not unfrequently three, crops in a year. The figs of the first crop, which in the East are called "boccores," or *early figs*, (in the Bible sometimes termed the "untimely" or *precocious* figs, and which were those here sought after,) usually ripen in June; though vigorous trees, in highly favourable situations, will sometimes yield ripe fruit in April, or early in May. No sooner do these draw near maturity, than the



"kermesz," or *summer fig*, begins to form, though it rarely ripens before August. This is the kind usually preserved.—*Shaw*. The fig-tree does not properly *blossom*, or send out flowers, as might be in-



ferred from our translation of Hab. iii. 17, at least not externally, but shoots or pushes out its fruit, "like so many buttons," from the trunk and large branches, with the flowers, imperfect as they are, enclosed within the fruit, which is at this time hollow. All figs drop when they are ripe, especially the "early" figs. See Nahum iii. 12.

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever And his disciples heard it.

Verse 14. *Jesus said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter, &c.*] Equivalent to declaring not only that no fruit should ever grow on it, but that it should be manifestly incapable of bearing fruit. Accordingly Matthew informs us that "presently," or *forthwith*, as Campbell renders the original word, "the fig-tree *withered* away;" though the disciples did not apparently notice its withering until the day following. See verses 20, 21. There is, therefore, no contradiction in the two accounts; for the one merely states that the tree *did*, at once, dry up, the other that the disciples saw, on the day following, that it *had* withered.

We are not to regard the "curse" pronounced on this barren tree as the expression of passionate disappointment, on the part of Christ, at not finding fruit thereon, as infidels have profanely asserted, but which calumny is amply refuted by the calm dignity which constantly marked our Lord's conduct: on the contrary, the whole transaction may be, and is commonly thought to be, emblematic and prophetic. The tree is supposed to symbolize the degenerate state of the Jewish church, which, though it had the "leaves" or external show of piety, was really destitute of the fruits of holiness: and the doom pronounced against it, to prefigure the desolation which was about to come upon her. See Matt. xxi. 47. The incident also affords to all Christ's disciples a significant emblem that, if unfruitful professors of his religion, they will, like the barren fig-tree, be "withered" before the blast of his displeasure, when he cometh to judge the earth.

15 And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

Verses 15, 16. *Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out, &c.*] Not into the *naos*, or sanctuary, (into which Jesus probably never entered,) but into the *courts* of the temple, the outer one of which these traffickers occupied. This was usually called "the court of the Gentiles," because within its precincts they were permitted to worship. The "casting out" here spoken of is probably to be understood of actual expulsion, not only by authoritatively commanding the traders to depart from that place with their merchandise, but by really driving them out—perhaps in some such way as was resorted to by Christ in the commencement of his public ministry. John ii. 15. This event is, we think, to be distinguished from the casting out recorded in Luke xix. 45, 46, which would appear to have occurred on the preceding day, and which is probably to be understood of mere reproof, and direction to trade there no more. That admonition having been disregarded, our Lord saw fit, on *this* occasion, to enforce his authority, and absolutely drive out these intruders. *Overthrew the tables of the money-changers*] The "money-changers" seem to have been persons who bought and sold coins of different nations; exchanging foreign money into Jewish, or the contrary. As, at the feasts, persons came up to Jerusalem from various countries, it was needful that facilities should be provided for exchanging the currency of one country into that of another, especially as the donations or dues to the sacred treasury were required to be paid in Jewish coin. It was not, therefore,

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry *any vessel* through the temple.

17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

18 And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

because of any unlawfulness in the business of "money-changing" that Jesus "overthrew" the tables, but because of the impropriety of transacting such business in that holy place. *Would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel, &c.*] "This," says Bloomfield, "is usually understood to mean any vessel devoted to profane uses, and by which any gain was made." He also states that the word rendered "vessel" may denote any piece of furniture or dress, or in a general sense *any article*, whether for use or traffic. *Den of thieves*] See page 25.

Verse 18. *The scribes, &c., heard it*] Heard of his forcibly expelling them that "bought and sold" from the temple, and of the reasons which he gave for so doing. *Sought how they might destroy him*] Planned how they might bring about his death: apparently in a private manner. *For they feared him*] Perhaps feared that he would destroy their influence with the people. They knew him to be opposed to their traditionary dogmas and evil practices, and saw with alarm the increasing hold he was gaining on the popular mind. This seems to be given as the reason why they "sought to destroy him." *The people was astonished at his doctrine*] "Astonished at," here, denotes something more than mere wonder; for the surprise of the people, however great, would furnish no just ground of uneasiness to the

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots.

21 And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away.

scribes and priests, if unaccompanied by a sense of approval of his doctrines. Accordingly Campbell renders, "the multitude *admired* his doctrines." Luke tells us, (xix. 47, 48,) that notwithstanding this desire and intention of the scribes and priests to "destroy" Jesus, "they could not find what they might do,"—that is, could not hit upon any plan for the accomplishment of their design—"for all the people"—meaning the populace generally—"were very attentive to hear him."

Verse 19. *When even was come, he went out of the city*] Went from Jerusalem to Bethany.

Verses 20, 21. *In the morning*] The morning of the day following that on which the barren fig-tree was doomed, as already stated. *As they passed by*] Passed by the place where it stood. Our Lord and his disciples were again on their way from Bethany to Jerusalem. (Verse 27.) *They saw the fig-tree dried up, &c.*] From Matthew's statement of the circumstances attending the destruction of this tree, it would *seem*, as remarked on verse 14, that it not only dried up *instantly*, while the disciples were yet standing by, but that they then noticed, with extreme astonishment, its sudden decay. Matt. xxi. 19, 20. Mark's testimony is, however, more full and circumstantial than that of Matthew, without being contrary thereto; and he expressly asserts that the disciples did *not observe* the withered condition of the tree until the day following, when on their way again to

22 And Jesus answering, saith unto them, Have faith in God.

23 For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

the metropolis; and that then Peter, "calling to remembrance" his Lord's words, said, "Master, the fig-tree which thou cursedst," or didst devote to destruction, "is withered away." It thus appears that verses 20, 21, &c. of Matt. xix., are not to be read in immediate connection with those which precede them, but to be referred to the events of the subsequent day.

Verse 22. *Jesus saith—Have faith in God*] In the Scriptures, "faith" implies not *belief* merely, but also *trust* or *reliance*. "Faith in God," then, is an unwavering belief and trust in him, as being able and willing to perform or bestow all that he has promised. Some commentators render the passage, as in the margin, "Have the faith of God," and understand by it *a strong* or *great faith*; as "mountains of God" import *exceeding great mountains*. The former view is generally preferred.

Verse 23. *Verily*] Truly, certainly. *Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, &c.*] "Removing mountains" is an Eastern form of speech, used to denote the attempting impossible undertakings. Taken in connection with the preceding verse, the Saviour's declaration would seem to be equivalent to saying that his followers should, by faith in God, be enabled to accomplish things which would otherwise be altogether beyond their ability. This strong figure was probably

24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

employed, 1st. To impress the apostles with the conviction that no obstacles should be insurmountable to their faith and God's power; but that, in the prosecution of their work, they should be enabled to triumph over all opposition; 2d. To leave on record a comforting assurance to Christians in all ages, that implicit faith should always be honoured—"he shall have whatsoever he saith." From the following verses it would seem that this faith is to be exercised, mainly, in believing prayer.

As this conversation grew out of the miraculous decay of the barren fig-tree, it is supposed by many that the "faith" referred to is of that character usually denominated "the faith of miracles,"—or that kind and degree of faith by which miracles were wrought. If so, the passage cannot be applicable to all time, but was designed only for the apostolic age, and for the special encouragement of workers of miracles. But the statement is too unqualified, we think, to allow of its being interpreted in this restricted sense.

Verse 24. *Therefore*] Since "faith" is thus prevalent with God. *What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them*] The words, "Believe that ye receive," &c., cannot mean that if men persuade themselves they have the things for which they ask, they do really possess them. Its import is, "Believe that ye *shall* receive them, and ye shall have them,"—that is, if the request be according to the will of God. It would thus appear that that trust in the divine promises which prompts men to refer their requests to God, is peculiarly acceptable to him, and that

25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

he will most favourably regard petitions which are offered in this spirit of childlike confidence. He, however, must be the judge respecting the propriety of complying with the request; and we must confide not only in his ability to grant our petitions, and his kind disposition to gratify our desires, but also in his knowledge and wisdom, as determining what ought to be done. If he should withhold the desired benefit, it is our place cheerfully to submit, resting satisfied that the request is in some respect improper, or it would be granted.

Verse 25. *When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any*] When ye pray, forgive. Standing was the usual posture of the later Jews when engaged in prayer, except on occasions of deep humiliation, when they prostrated themselves before the divine Majesty. This was not, however, the universal practice. In Acts ix. 40, we find Peter *kneeling* in prayer; in Acts xx. 46, we read of Paul's praying in the same attitude. See, also, Acts xxi. 5. In the language of Mr. Barnes, however, we would say, "God looks upon *the heart*, rather than upon our position in worship; and if the heart be right, any posture may be proper. It cannot be doubted, however, that in private, in the family, and wherever it can be conveniently done, the kneeling posture is more proper, as expressing more humility and reverence, and being more in accordance with Scripture examples." The importance of cultivating kindly feelings toward all men, and especially

LESSON III.

[A. D. 29.]

The chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees, demand of Christ his authority for his acts, which he refuses to give—Jesus delivers the parable of the vineyard—Refers to “the stone which the builders rejected.”—Matt. xxi. 23–46; Mark xi. 27–xii. 12; Luke xx. 1–19.

MATT. xxi. 23–46.

AND when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

toward enemies, is strikingly exhibited in this passage. It would seem that however excellent “faith” may be, it is of little or no efficacy unless accompanied by *love*. In accordance with this sentiment is the declaration of Paul, founded, apparently, on this very text, “Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity—or love—I am nothing.” 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Reader, look well to thyself; and as thou wouldst be blessed and accepted of God, see that thou dost “for-give, if thou hast aught against any.”

NOTES ON MATT. xxi. 23–46.

Verse 23. *The chief priests and elders came unto him*] In “the temple;”—meaning, in one of the courts, probably the inner one, commonly called “the court of Israel.” To these “chief priests and elders” Luke adds (ch. xx. 1) “the scribes.” They were all, doubtless, members of the great national council, or sanhedrim, (which was composed of chief priests, scribes, and

elders,) and now approached Jesus in their official character. The "chief priests" are generally supposed to be the heads of the twenty-four courses, or classes, into which the priesthood was divided: the "scribes" are by some thought to be Levites, and appear to have been the learned men of the nation, (Matt. xxiii. 34; 1 Cor. i. 20,) and the authorized expounders of the law; (see Matt. xvii. 10; Mark xii. 35;) hence they are sometimes called lawyers: (comp. Matt. xxii. 35, with Mark xii. 28:) the "elders of the people" are conjectured to be such *lay* members of this body as, like the scribes, had been elected, or appointed by executive authority, to that honour.* It appears from the statements of Matthew and Luke that these persons came to Jesus while he was "teaching" and "preaching the gospel;" Mark says, "as he was *walking* in the temple,"—that is, in the covered piazza, which ran on three sides of the court. (For a notice of the "courts" of the temple, see vol. i., pp. 53, 54.) This discrepancy may be easily accounted for by supposing, either that our Lord *had been* instructing the people, but was not thus engaged at this moment; or, that he had not yet begun, though Matthew and Luke represent him as "teaching," because he had gone there for that purpose. *By what authority doest thou these things, &c.*] That is, by *virtue* of what authority?—what right have you? This question they had a perfect liberty to ask, because they were the guardians of the national religion, and it was their duty to examine the

* "Each of these classes, it is probable, consisted of twenty-four persons, making up the number seventy-two in all. This is certain of the heads of the courses, or "chief priests," among whom the high priest also would be included; and from Rev. iv. 4, it may be presumptively collected of the "elders," in which case it must have been true of the "scribes."—Greswell.

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying,

pretensions of persons assuming to be prophets, and to punish impostors. Hence, in a rabbinical tract entitled "Sanhedrim," it is said, "A false prophet, or a high priest, is only amenable to the council of seventy-one judges." It is further supposed that they licensed the public religious teachers. It is the opinion of most commentators that these magistrates have reference in their questions not only to our Lord's teaching, but also to his casting out the buyers and sellers, &c.

Verses 24, 25. *Jesus answered, I also will ask you one thing, &c.*] Our Lord's conduct in thus meeting question by question was not disrespectful, though it may at first sight appear so to us, (considering the official character of those with whom he was conversing,) but was in strict keeping with the custom of his country and age. "Schoettgen remarks, that among the Jews, if any proposed a captious question to another, the other had a right to propose one in turn, and not to answer the first till he had received a reply to his."—*Bloomfield*. Jesus knew that they had proposed their questions with the hope of finding matter of accusation against him, and not with an honest wish to know by what "authority" he acted. He therefore, instead of giving a direct reply, asked them a question which, if truly answered, would lead to the exposure of their wicked designs, and tend to vindicate his own conduct. *The baptism of John*] Meaning thereby his *ministry*, of which baptism was so prominent a part. *Was it from heaven, or of men?*]

If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people: for all hold John as a prophet.

That is, Did he derive his authority to preach and baptize from God, or from men? This was doubtless an embarrassing question: because, had they admitted John the Baptist to be a prophet, they must have admitted Jesus to be the Messiah; for he "bare witness of him:" (John i. 15:) and they dare not say any thing against the former, for "all held John to be a prophet." *And they reasoned with (or among) themselves, &c.]* Conversed privately, seeking how they should answer. *If we shall say, From heaven]* That is, Of God. *He will say, Why did ye not believe him?]* Which it is manifest they had not truly done, or they would have believed on Christ. If they admitted that John had derived his ministry "from heaven," this would have been a sufficient reason why they should have "believed him,"—that is, have believed his declarations, and acted accordingly; for it would have shown that they considered him God's messenger, and men are bound to receive and obey all the divine commands. And they doubtless saw that on this ground they must have admitted Jesus to be the Messiah, for John testified him to be such.

Verse 26. *If we shall say, Of men]* And thus charge John with being an impostor. *We fear the people]* They feared the people would "stone" them. Luke xx. 6. *For all hold John as a prophet]* That is, the people generally hold him to be a prophet. More respect seems to have been shown to John, than to Jesus in the latter part of his ministry; the reason was, the people were pleased to hear John say that he was the forerunner of

27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

28 But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.

the Messiah; but when Jesus came, he was not such a person as they wished for and expected.—*Lardner*.

Verse 27. *We cannot tell*] Or, as it is in the original, *we know not*. Plainly, an insincere reply: but which they adopted rather than admit Christ's claims, or bring upon themselves the indignation of the people. *He said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority, &c.*] As though he had said, Since you confess yourselves unable to decide whether John was a true messenger from God or a false teacher, I refuse to submit my claims to your decision. It will be remembered, however, that Jesus had already frequently told them "by what authority" he acted, but they had as often refused to receive his declarations. See John v., vi., vii., viii., x.

Verse 28. *But what think ye?*] What is your opinion of the case I am about to state? The parable which follows is mentioned by Matthew only. *A certain man had two sons*] This "man" represents God; and the two "sons" represent two classes of persons in the Jewish nation—those who had been notoriously wicked, but who repented at the preaching of John and turned to God; and the hypocritical, as these priests, scribes, and elders, who professed the utmost respect for, and obedience to, the divine commands, but rejected God's prophets. See last clause of verse 31. *Vineyard*] Vineyards are enclosures within which grape-vines are cultivated. They were very numerous in Palestine.

29 He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir; and went not.

31 Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them,

Verse 29. *I will not*] A flat refusal to his father's command. This "first son" represents the openly wicked, who lived as if utterly unmindful, even in appearance, of the injunctions of the divine law. *But afterward he repented, and went*] To "repent" is, literally, *to look back with sorrow* on some former act or acts, and is hence employed to denote, 1st. A change of views; and 2d. A change of conduct. Thus this son looked back with sorrow upon his disobedience, and went and performed his father's bidding.

Verse 30. *The second said, I go, sir; and went not*] This prompt, but hypocritical assent, (for the tenor of the parable shows that the willingness was feigned,) followed by actual disobedience, fitly illustrates the *professed* readiness of the Pharisaic rulers to do all God's will, and their real determination to receive and do only so much as pleased them. They therefore followed not the will of their heavenly Father, but their own inclinations.

Verse 31. *Whether of them twain*] Which of the two. *Did the will of his father?*] Neither of these sons is to be regarded as a pattern of filial obedience. They were both faulty. But the meaning of the question is, Which came nearest to doing the will of the father? The case was so clear that the priests could not do otherwise than answer, as they did, "The first," even if they feared it would lead to their own condemnation. It is probable, however, that they did not perceive the

Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

design of Christ in putting forth the parable; and therefore answered without hesitation, thus preparing the way for the severe rebuke which followed. *Verily, the publicans and harlots*] Those who were accounted the vilest sinners. *Go into the kingdom of God before you*] By "kingdom of God," here, is meant that glorious dominion which the Messiah was to establish. Into this kingdom the vile and despised were pressing, while the self-righteous stood aloof. As it was then, so, to a great extent, is it now. Of all characters, that of the hypocritical is the most hopeless. The openly profane are much more likely to repent and turn to God, than they. The reason is, that the latter have nothing by which they can defend themselves against the accusations of a guilty conscience: while the former, having a show of godliness, screen themselves thereby from all the attacks that can be made upon them.

Verse 32. *John came in the way of righteousness*] Campbell renders, "in the way of sanctity," which he thinks expresses much better the sense of the original. By this declaration our Lord probably meant that John pointedly enforced, and constantly practised, (though in good faith, not hypocritically,) that austerity and self-mortification in which the Pharisees made "righteousness" chiefly to consist; and that they might, therefore, have been reasonably expected to have adopted his views: instead of which, however, they rejected him.

33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round

"This," remarks Mr. Watson, "is the point of the reproof: they boasted of strict righteousness, conformity to all the institutions of God; and in this way John came to them; this was the character of his ministry, which they, however, proudly spurned, and thereby declared their hypocrisy."

Verse 33. *Hear another parable*] The word "parable" is derived from a Greek word (*parabole*) which signifies *to compare together*, and denotes a similitude taken from natural things to illustrate spiritual or moral subjects. 'This parable is usually called "the parable of the vineyard," because a vineyard furnishes the imagery. From Luke xx. 9, it would seem that it was addressed, not to the "elders," &c., but to "the people." *A certain householder*] The master of the house—the head of the family. *Planted a vineyard*] The Jews bestowed much care and labour on their vineyards; and as Palestine is in most parts hilly, and in some even mountainous, the vineyards were usually formed on the slopes of the hills or sides of the mountains. When the acclivity was very steep, the vineyard was arranged in successive terraces, a bed of good soil being deposited on the naked rock, and each terrace supported on its lower slope by a wall of stone. See Isa. v. 1; Jer. xxxi. 5; Amos ix. 13. They thus gave, though with great labour, a fertile and pleasant aspect to spots which would otherwise have had a barren and desolate appearance. The south of Palestine was especially famed for the excellence of its grapes. *Hedged it round about*] Enclosed it, in order to its protection, with a "hedge," probably of *thorns*, they being

about, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country :

frequently employed for this purpose. Such a "hedge" would seem, from Scriptural allusions, to have formed a very secure defence. Prov. xv. 19; Mic. vii. 4. *Digged a wine-press, &c.*] Termed by Mark (xii. 1) a "wine-fat," or vat. The original signifies *a trough*.—*Rob. Lex.* The "wine-press" is the receptacle into which the grapes are cast to be "trodden," that the juice may be expressed from them. In large vineyards this is usually, as here, a fixture, generally of masonry, and, "as constructed at the present time in Persia, is nearly eight feet square and four feet high."—*Jahn*. Underneath, or on the side of this, a "vat" or *cistern* is made, which, for greater coolness, to prevent the too rapid fermentation of the liquor, is usually subterranean. The juice flows from the press into this cistern through a grated aperture in the side, near the bottom. *And built a tower*] This is either a temporary hut, termed in Isaiah i. 8, "a cottage in a vineyard," or, which is more common, a permanent building; and is principally used as a watch tower, commanding, for that purpose, a view of the entire vineyard. These watch towers are mentioned by several Eastern travellers. Prof. Robinson says, "Each vineyard has a small house or tower of stone, which serves for a keeper's lodge." During the vintage, they are also used as residences for those employed in gathering and disposing of the fruit.* Mr. Paxton, in his "Letters from Palestine," speaking of the scenes in the vicinity of Bethlehem, remarks, "I could not but notice the number and beauty of the watch houses, or little towers, which

* Biblical Researches in Palestine, &c., vol. i, p. 314.

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

were placed in the vineyards; some of them were round, and some square, made of stone, from ten to fifteen or twenty feet high." Other authority makes them about fifty feet high, and twenty feet square. It may not be amiss to remark, that the circumstances of "hedging," building a "wine-press," &c., are merely used to complete the figure, or, at most, simply to express that the vineyard was provided with every thing necessary to its culture and security, and form no part of the moral application. *Let it out to husbandmen*] That is, to *tillers of the ground*. This is frequently done in the East: the proprietor receiving, as in this case, (verse 34,) a certain portion of the produce as rent. *Went into a far country*] Campbell renders, *went abroad*; and observes, that the original "implies barely that it was a foreign country he went to; nothing is added to inform us whether it was *far* or *near*." Luke adds, (xx. 9,) that he was to remain "a long time."

Verses 34, 35. *When the time of fruit drew near*] By "time of fruit," here, is meant the season for gathering the fruit—the vintage. *He sent his servants, that they might receive the fruits*] Rather, "*his fruit*;"—(*Bloomfield*;) that is, the *portion* which belonged to him for rent. In the East this usually amounts to about one-half, after deducting the expenses incurred by the proprietor in furnishing the necessary vines, implements, &c. *The husbandmen—beat one, killed another, stoned another*] As this is a *supposed case*, it is not necessary that

36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

such an occurrence as is here stated should ever have taken place, in order to constitute it an apt illustration; the fitness of the parable consists not in the truthfulness of the imagined case, but in its adaptation to the conduct or character of those against whom the parable is directed. The word rendered "beat," here, literally signifies *flayed*, or *skinned*; "but as words denoting great violence come at length, through abuse, to bear a milder sense, it was at length used to signify *beat severely*."—*Bloomfield*. Instead of "stoned another," Campbell renders, *Drove away with stones another*, and observes, that "the original does not always denote to kill by stoning, as the English word *stoned* seems to imply." That it does not so signify in this place is, he thinks, evident from the distinction made between "killed" and "stoned." Mark and Luke differ somewhat from Matthew in their record of this parable, being more minute. They represent the "householder" as sending one servant at a time, the first of whom was "beaten," and "sent empty away." The second, according to Luke, they "beat also, and entreated him shamefully;" Mark says, "at him they cast stones," &c.; a third, Luke says, "they wounded and cast out;"—Mark says, "him they killed," probably they so wounded him that he died. It will be thus seen that there is no *contradictory* testimony, though the statements of each author differ from those of the others. These slight differences prove the evangelists to be independent and true witnesses.

Verses 36, 37. *Again he sent other servants more than*

37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*.

the first] “More,” here, is commonly supposed to denote *more honourable* servants than the preceding ones. This sending again and again strongly exhibits the forbearance and mildness of the “householder.” *They did unto them likewise*] Treated them in like manner as they had done the other servants. *Last of all, he sent his son*] Mark tells us this was his only son, well-beloved. Luke (xx. 13) represents the “lord of the vineyard” as debating with himself what he should do; the misconduct of the husbandmen having, apparently, greatly troubled him. Then comes the resolve to send his “beloved son.” *They will reverence my son*] Luke says, “*It may be* they will reverence,” &c. The original, however, will also bear rendering, “*Surely* they will reverence,” &c., and therefore agrees with the other evangelists. The proprietor had a right to expect the husbandmen would duly honour his son, and is therefore represented as acting under the impression that they would do so. This circumstance is evidently thrown in for the greater effect, and cannot be dwelt on in the application of the parable.

Verse 38. *This is the heir, let us kill him, &c.*] An “heir” is one entitled to succeed to an estate; an “inheritance” is the property which he inherits. The “husbandmen” had acted thus wickedly from the first, with the apparent design of defrauding the proprietor of his just rights, and possessing the property themselves. They

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

therefore "slay" or "kill" the son, as being the chief obstacle to the consummation of their wishes, and "seize his inheritance."

Verses 40, 41. *When the lord of the vineyard cometh*] Returneth from the "far country" into which he had gone. Ver. 33. *What will he do,*] This question was probably put to the "people" who stood by. Luke xx. 9. *They say, He will miserably destroy*] He will put them to a wretched death. Mark and Luke ascribe this declaration to our Lord. Mark xii. 9; Luke xx. 16. Probably both statements are correct; for the answer may, in the first place, have been given by the people, and afterward repeated by Christ, by way of confirmation.

The design of Jesus, in speaking this parable, doubtless was to exhibit and illustrate the fearful misconduct of the Jewish rulers, in having so perversely and wickedly departed from God, and rejected his messengers. Of the persons and things represented, it is probable that "the householder" symbolizes God, and the "vineyard" the Jewish nation; that the "husbandmen" represent the priests and rulers; the "servants," the prophets—many of whom they had indeed "evil-entreated," (see 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21; Neh. ix. 26; Jer. xx. 2,) though it is not likely that our Lord refers to any particular case;—and that the "well-beloved son," denotes our Lord Jesus Christ, whom they, a few days afterward, put to an ig-

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

nomorious death. The "coming of the lord of the vineyard" to punish the husbandmen, undoubtedly refers to the calamities which should fall upon the Jews, and the transferring their privileges to the Gentiles.

Verse 42. *Jesus saith, Did ye never read, The stone which the builders rejected, &c.]* This passage is quoted from Psa. cxviii. 22, 23. It is supposed to have been first spoken of David, who, after having been persecuted by Saul, and rejected by the chief men of Israel, was finally elevated to the rule of the nation. But even if it might, in a restricted sense, be applied to him, it is evident, from the direct assertion of Scripture, that in its highest, ultimate sense, "the stone" designated Jesus, the Messiah. See Acts iv. 10, 11. From the same passage (Acts iv. 11) it also appears that by "the builders," the Jewish priests and rulers are meant. It would seem then, from this and the succeeding verse, that the Jewish church or state is here represented as an edifice, of which the priests and rulers were the builders; and as builders would reject a stone which they deemed unsuited to their purpose, so the Jews are represented as rejecting Christ, who, in consequence of this rejection, had become, or rather was about to become, the "head," or chief "corner stone," in a new spiritual house, the Christian church, when the "kingdom of God" should be taken from them, and given to the Gentiles, who would bring forth the fruits thereof,—love and obedience to God,—which *they* had failed to do. By the "corner stone" is meant the foundation on which the whole building rests. In this

43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

sense Christ is the corner stone of the Christian edifice. Isa. xxviii. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 6; Eph. ii. 20. By "head of the corner," some understand the *top-stone*, or *coping*; but the compiler prefers taking "head" in the sense of *chief*, as is often done, and so resolve the whole figure into that of a foundation stone. Mr. Wesley takes this view.

Verse 43. *Therefore*—because you have rejected me—*the kingdom of God shall be taken from you*] Ye shall no longer be the peculiar people of God. *And given to a nation, &c.*] The benefits of Messiah's kingdom shall be extended to the Gentiles,—to all people, of whatsoever country, who embrace the plan of salvation now to be promulgated. On hearing this denunciation, it appears from Luke (chap. xx. 16) that some of the bystanders, struck with the alarming nature of the declaration, exclaimed, "God forbid!"—thus deprecating the judgments which were about to come on them.

Verse 44. *Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken*] The "stone" referred to is that "corner stone" before spoken of, under which similitude Christ is represented. "Falling on" this stone probably means *stumbling at*, or *over it*, so as to fall. "Broken" means *wounded*, *hurt*, that is, by the fall. These expressions are used to denote the offence which many took at the lowly condition of Christ, and its *immediate* effects. There would seem to be allusion in them to Isa. viii. 14, 15, where Christ is termed a "stumbling stone" at which

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

many would "stumble, and fall, and be broken." On [whomsoever it shall fall, &c.] By this figure of "the stone," or Christ, "falling on" the transgressor, is probably denoted the fearful amount of wrath which shall come upon those who finally reject him. "He who falls upon a stone," observes Wetstein, "is bruised indeed, yet may be healed; but he on whom an immense stone falls, is crushed, as it were, to dust."

Verse 45. *When the chief priests and Pharisees.*] Luke says, (ch. xx. 19,) the "chief priests and scribes." There is here, however, no disagreement, for the "scribes" were generally Pharisees, and the probability is that all these were of that sect. *They perceived that he spake of them*] Luke says, "against them." They doubtless recognised themselves in the "husbandmen" and the "builders." This so exasperated them that they again,—even "that same hour," (Luke xx. 19,)—"sought to lay hands on him,"—that is, to arrest or destroy him—but "feared the multitude," who "took him for a prophet."

LESSON IV.

[A. D. 29.]

Jesus delivers the parable of the marriage feast—Confounds the Pharisees and Herodians.—Matt. xxii. 1-22; Mark xii. 13-17; Luke xx. 20-26.

MATT. xxii. 1-22.

AND Jesus answered, and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

NOTES ON MATT. xxii. 1-22.

Verse 1. *Jesus—spake unto them again*] He continued, after the chief priests, &c., left, (comp. Matt. xxi. 46 with Mark xii. 12,) to instruct the people by parables. The scene is still in the temple. For the import of the word "parable," see preceding lesson, page 75.

Verses 2-4. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king*] Meaning, that God's conduct in the gospel dispensation may be likened to, or illustrated by, that of a certain king, who "made a marriage," or marriage feast, "for his son." *Sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden*] The words, "call them that were bidden," mean, to *summon* to the feast those who had been *already invited*, and had *accepted* the invitation. Several distinguished commentators observe, that it was anciently the custom for guests to be twice invited to an entertainment, (or rather, first invited and then summoned,) the *invitation* being given some time before, the *summons* immediately previous to the ban-

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and *my fatlings are* killed, and all things *are* ready; come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*.

quet. This custom is still common in the East.—*Pict. Bible*. As the marriage feast represents the gospel, so the invited persons represent the Jews who had been “bidden” to this spiritual entertainment by their prophets, and especially by the ministry of John, and were now summoned to the banquet by the preaching of Christ and his followers. *They would not come*] Herein lay their fault:—they *could* have come, but would not. How truly does Christ say of them, Ye *will not* come unto me, that ye might have life! *Again, he sent forth other servants*] So desirous was he that they should partake of the feast. The request was now more urgent than before. *My fatlings are killed*] This term, “fatlings,” “includes calves, sheep, and fowls, and all such animals as are put up to feed, with the exception of bullocks.”—*Bloomfield*.

By these “other servants,” most commentators understand the ministry of the apostles, &c., *after* the resurrection of Christ.

Verses 5, 6. *They made light of it*] Treated the invitation with contempt, or as a thing of no consequence. “Making light of Christ, and of the salvation wrought out by him, is,” says Matthew Henry, “the damning sin of the world. Multitudes perish eternally through a prevailing indifference to the matters of their souls.” This verse and the next strikingly portray the conduct of the

7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth : and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

Jews toward the earlier preachers of Christianity. Acts v. 17, 18, 40 ; viii. 1 ; xii. 1-3. *Entreated them spitefully*] Treated them shamefully, abused them. Here, again, as in the case of the "husbandmen" maltreating and slaying the "servants," in the parable of the vineyard, (Matt. xxi. 35, &c., p. 78,) our Lord presents not only a fictitious, but a very extreme case, to illustrate the actual wickedness of the Jews, more especially of the priests and Pharisees, who are probably referred to by the "remnant" of the bidden who were so abusive and violent.

Verse 7. *When the king heard thereof, &c.*] Heard of their continued rejection of his "call" to the banquet, and of their abuse of his servants, he was exceedingly displeased. *He—destroyed those murderers, &c.*] This represents the judgments which were about to come upon the Jewish people, and which took place about forty years afterward, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. This severe visitation is here plainly ascribed to the national rejection of the gospel, and abuse of its ministers.

The incidents narrated in the seventh verse are evidently given in anticipation of their real order, probably to finish this branch of the parable : for certainly the "feast" could not be kept waiting during the preparation for, and the actual infliction of, punishment on these murderers. Besides, the gospel was proclaimed to the Gentiles long before the destruction of Jerusalem. In historical order, therefore, the incidents mentioned in the seventh verse are to be understood as taking place after those mentioned in the fourteenth.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all, as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

Verses 8, 9. *Then saith he* (the king) *to the servants*] That is, on hearing that those who were "bidden" would not come. *The wedding is ready*] Rather, the wedding feast. *But they who were bidden were not worthy*] The expression "not worthy" is probably to be taken in the sense of *not fit*: their misconduct showed that they did not possess the character or moral qualifications which would have made them suitable guests. There was no correspondence between their dispositions and tastes, and the honours and blessings prepared for their acceptance. *Go ye therefore into the highways*] By "highways" we are probably to understand "the great thoroughfares of the city, and outlets into the country—the great trunks, as it were, of communication; and which, in the great ancient cities, were made to terminate at the gates."—*Bloomfield*. *As many as ye shall find, bid*] Without respect to station or country. This represents the universal proclamation of the gospel.

Verse 10. *So the servants went*] As commanded. *And gathered—both bad and good*] Persons of every description of character—some more wicked, some less so. *All*, however, need the gospel. By this is intimated that the "bad," as well as the "good," would form part of the *visible church*; "the doors of which are to be thrown open to all who profess to accept the invitation. But it follows not from this that no discipline

11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment :

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in

is to be exercised in it. It was not the design of the parable to illustrate *this* subject, and it is therefore passed over, that deficiency being abundantly supplied by other parts of the New Testament."—*Watson*.

Verses 11, 12. *When the king came in to see the guests*] "By this circumstance ancient manners are accurately depicted, for, as Grotius tells us, grandees, and those who gave magnificent entertainments, used, when their guests were seated, to enter the dining hall."—*Bloomfield*. *He saw a man which had not on a wedding garment*] "This would not seem to mean a garment peculiarly appropriated to weddings, but a garment suitable to appear in at a royal feast, and here called a 'wedding garment' from the occasion. It is an ancient and still existing Oriental custom of royal banquets, that no one shall appear at them but in a robe of honour received from the king. This dress, which every one receives who is deemed worthy to enter the monarch's presence or to appear at his feast, must be worn by those who appear before him. No one can be admitted who is not thus arrayed; and should any one manage to introduce himself without it, he would not fail to be expelled with ignominy and punishment. To refuse the dress when offered, or not to appear in it when received, is considered to convey the strongest possible expression of insult and disrespect."—*Pict. Bible*. As the guests, on this occasion, were collected out of the "highways," and unexpectedly invited to the banquet;—and as it was required of each, in conformity with prevailing usage, to be arrayed in a particular robe;—so it would appear that

hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand

this part of their dress *must be* provided from the king's wardrobe. It is also equally clear that the not having on the robe which etiquette required was entirely the fault of the guest; otherwise he would not have been "speechless," or silent, when required to answer.

"It would be wearisome," says Watson, "to enumerate all the notions which have been entertained of the mystical signification of this festal garment. Nothing, however, can be more clear than this—that as the wearing of this garment constituted the *meetness* of a man to be received as a guest at the feast, so it must represent *collectively* all those qualities which constitute our meetness for heaven." These may be expressed in the single word HOLINESS, without which "no man can see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14. If we are thus "found of Him, without spot and blameless," we shall be welcomed into "the joy of our Lord;" but if not thus found, we are here most forcibly premonished of our doom, and of that consciousness of guilt which shall leave us without excuse.—*Watson*. It thus appears that a mere profession of religion will not save the soul. They who have not the spirit of Christ are none of his. The word rendered "friend," here, does not, according to Campbell, imply either acquaintanceship or affection. It is merely a civil form of address to strangers. *How camest thou in hither*] That is, by what right—what business hast thou here, "not having a wedding garment?" A strong indication that he had no right.

Verses 13, 14. *Then said the king—cast him into outer darkness, &c.*] That is, into the darkness outside.

and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk.

See further on Matt. viii. 12, vol. ii, p. 96. *For many are called, but few chosen*] The "called" are all those invited to the feast; the "chosen," or *approved*, those who accepted that call, and whose appearance and deportment were such as became the occasion. It would therefore appear that all men are "called" to the blessings represented by this feast; that the "chosen" are such among them as improve their "call." The word "chosen" is not, therefore, to be taken in the sense of arbitrary selection, but as expressing an act of choice founded upon sufficient reasons.

The object of this parable seems to be, 1st. To represent the invitation given to the Jews to embrace the gospel, their rejection of that invitation, the severe punishment to be inflicted on them for their disobedience, and the admission of the Gentiles to the privileges of Christianity. 2d. That the rewards promised in the gospel are not to be conferred on *mere professors*, but upon those only who cultivate the dispositions and habits enjoined by its precepts.

Verse 15. *Then went the Pharisees*] That is, *such of them* as were rulers, and were the opposers of Christ. There is reason to suppose that the "scribes," and "elders of the people" generally, belonged to this sect. *And took counsel how they might entangle him in talk*] "Took counsel," means, *consulted together*. To "entangle," means, to *ensnare*, as in a net or trap. The text denotes that they sought to frame some artful

16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man*; for thou regardest not the person of men.

question to be proposed to Jesus, in answering which they hoped he would say something that should furnish matter of accusation against him. Having agreed what this question should be, they, according to Luke, "sent forth spies which should feign themselves just men,"—that is, should profess to be sincerely and honestly desirous of obtaining his opinion on the question they had to offer, which "spies" should report his answer unto them, "that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor." Luke xx. 20. What an infamous scheme!

Verse 16. *They sent unto him their disciples, with the Herodians*] That is, the Pharisaic rulers sent them. They must, therefore, have made an arrangement to this effect with the "Herodians." "Their disciples," means, certain of their *followers*—of their party. Mark has it, (xii. 13,) "certain Pharisees." Of the "Herodians" nothing *certain* is known; but the prevailing and best-founded opinion respecting them seems to be, that they were a *political* party composed of the courtiers, partisans, and adherents of Herod Antipas; and who held, with him, that the dominion of the Romans over the Jews was *lawful*, and ought to be submitted to by the people. It is not improbable that the party was chiefly found in Galilee, even if not entirely limited to the bounds of Herod's jurisdiction; and that those here mentioned were merely visitors at Jerusalem, having come with Herod to attend the feast of passover. See Mark iii. 6; Luke xxiii. 7. *Master, we know that thou art true*]

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar, or not?

"True," here, means upright, ingenuous—not a dissembler. They doubtless assumed this tone of respect, and spoke thus flatteringly, to conciliate Jesus, and hide their own wicked design. *Neither carest thou for any*] That is, Thou wilt not be prevented declaring thy sentiments, either by respect or fear of men. *For thou regardest not the person of men*] By "*person of men*," here, we are to understand their external consideration and circumstances. And by "*not regarding*" them, is meant, that he would not suffer himself to be swayed by them—would not be *partial*.

Verse 17. *Tell us, therefore*] "*Therefore*" means, *for this reason*,—namely, that thou art so independent and impartial. They thus assign their belief of his uprightness to be the ground of submitting to him the question about to be offered. *What thinkest thou?*] What is thy opinion? *Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar, or not?*] Mark adds, (xii. 15,) Shall we give, or shall we not give—meaning, Shall we pay it, or not? "*Tribute*" is the tax which is usually laid on a conquered nation by the conquerors. The word is here used to denote the *capitation* or *poll tax* which each Jew was assessed, for the support of the Roman government. The "*Cesar*" specially referred to was Tiberius Cesar, the second emperor of Rome, he being at this time the reigning monarch. The question is not, however, to be considered as limited to his particular rule; for its import is, Is it lawful to give tribute—that is, to be in subjection to, *the Roman authority*? The Jews felt their subjection to the Romans to be a most galling yoke; and very many of the people—especially the Pharisees—deemed the pay-

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, *ye* hypocrites?

19 Show me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him a penny.

ment of the tribute which was exacted of them to be actually "unlawful"—that is, contrary to the will of God as expressed in their law, (Deut. xvii. 15,) inasmuch as it was paid to a heathen power. It will hence be perceived that the query implied whether it was not a religious duty for them to revolt, and throw off their yoke by violence.

This ensnaring question was framed, it will be remembered, by the Pharisaic rulers, after much deliberation; and consequences injurious to Jesus were doubtless confidently anticipated from it. For if, on the one hand, he declared it "lawful" to *pay* the tribute, they knew such an expression would materially injure his reputation and influence in the community, the tribute being so unpopular; and if, on the other, he declared its payment to be "unlawful"—which, from Luke's statement, they seem to have expected that he would—they could at once accuse him to the "governor," as a seditious person, and an inciter to rebellion. The question being offered, too, by the contending parties—probably *known* to be such—would give an air of integrity to the whole matter well calculated to lull suspicion.

Verses 18, 19. *Jesus perceived their wickedness*] Luke has it, "their craftiness." *Why tempt ye me*] Why seek ye to lead me into difficulty? *Hypocrites*] They certainly were such; for they professed to be candid inquirers—"just men"—though their sole object was his destruction. *Show me the tribute-money*] The coin in which the tribute was paid. *They brought him a*

20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

21 They say unto him, Cesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

penny] The original shows this to have been the *denarius*, a small silver Roman coin worth about fourteen cents of our money. It does not necessarily follow from their bringing him a "penny" that a single denarius formed the entire amount of the tax; but that the amount, whatever it was, was paid in this coin, which the Romans may have insisted on in order to the obtaining for it the wider circulation, as evidence of their dominion over the country. For a cut of the denarius, see vol. iii, p. 310.

Verse 20. *Whose is this image and superscription?*] By "image," here, we are to understand the "head" or likeness of the Roman emperor; and by "superscription," the inscription or lettering around it. Bloomfield, quoting Occo, tells us that the inscription was "ΚΑΙΣΑΡ ΑΥΤΟΥΣΤ: ΙΟΥΔΑΙΑΣ ΕΑΛΩΚΥΙΑΣ"—CESAR AUGUSTUS; JUDEA BEING SUBDUED. The origin of stamps and impressions on coins is attributed to the Persians.

Verse 21. *They say, Cesar's*] Julius Cesar is said to have been the first person who caused his "image" to be struck on the Roman coin, which practice was perpetuated by his successors. The fact of Cesar's "image and superscription" being on the current coin was evidence that he was monarch: and consequently the Jews were his subjects, according to the doctrine of their own rabbins, "that to admit the impression and inscription of any prince on their current coin involved an acknowledgment of subjection to him." *Render therefore unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's*] It is the

22 When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

opinion of many expositors that these words are to be understood as implying our Lord's approval of the tax. But it would appear from the record of the evangelists, that the querists did not so regard them: neither does the compiler. Christ simply states, that *if Cesar be king*, he is to be respected as such; and that *if they* enjoyed the protection of the government and the laws, it was their duty to aid in the maintenance of that government, and suitably to honour those laws. But as to the legitimacy or illegitimacy of Cesar's sway he expresses no opinion. *And unto God the things that are God's*] Namely, love, obedience, worship. While, then, on the one hand, our Lord inculcates proper principles of submission to rulers, he also, on the other, lays down a rule of general and easy application to restrain the abuse of their power. They may not claim, nor the people render to them, "the things that belong to God." Hence the civil power has no right to coerce the conscience of any man in religious matters, for every one is under positive obligation to obey the injunctions of his Creator, and should be at liberty to interpret those injunctions for himself:—if he misinterpret or disobey them, he must bear the consequences. By "the things that are God's," some, however, understand the temple tribute, or tax of half a shekel, to be meant; but this opinion seems to be forced and untenable.

Verse 22. *They marvelled*] Luke says, (xx. 26,) "at his answer," it was so open, but yet so unexceptionable. Luke also informs us, that "they could not take hold of his words before the people:" a clear proof, we

LESSON V.

[A. D. 29.

Christ confutes the Sadducees, and establishes the doctrines of the separate existence of spirits and the resurrection of the dead—He replies to the question of a scribe as to which is the great commandment of the law—He questions the Pharisees respecting the Christ, and proves him to be both God and man. Matt. xxii. 23–46; Mark xii. 18–37; Luke xx. 27–44.

MATT. xxii. 23–46.

THE same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

think, that Christ is not to be regarded as having settled the question of the *lawfulness* or *unlawfulness* of the "tribute," in the sense in which they proposed it, but only as having laid down an abstract rule.

Dr. Hales seems to consider the admonition in the twenty-first verse to contain two distinct injunctions—the former addressed to the Pharisees, the latter to the Herodians. His language is—"He [Christ] significantly warns those turbulent and seditious demagogues, the Pharisees, to render unto Cesar the dues of Cesar, which they resisted; and those licentious and irreligious courtiers, the Herodians, to render unto God the dues of God, which they neglected; thus publicly reproving both, but obliquely, in a way they could not take hold of." Mr. Wesley entertains the same view.

NOTES ON MATT. xxii. 23–46.

Verse 23. *The same day*] Meaning, the day on which he had confuted the Pharisees and Herodians. (Compare verses 16, 22.) This was Wednesday, the second day

24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

before the crucifixion. From the note of time given by Luke, who, after narrating the defeat of the Herodians, &c., says that "*then* came to him," &c., (Luke xx. 27,) it would seem that the incident here noticed occurred very soon after the previous party left Jesus. *Certain of the Sadducees*] The "Sadducees" were a religious sect among the Jews. Their founder was one Sadoc, an eminent rabbi, who is supposed to have lived about two hundred and fifty years before Christ. They were strenuous advocates of the "law," but rejected the traditions of the elders. They denied the doctrines of the resurrection of the human body, and the existence of angels or spirits, (Acts xxiii. 8,) and consequently, the immortality of the human soul. Their numbers were inconsiderable, but they ranked among them many persons of wealth and great worldly respectability. Several of them were advanced to the high-priesthood. *Which say there is no resurrection*] Not only no resurrection of the body, but no future state whatever. They going much further than the pagans, most of whom did indeed deny the resurrection of the body, but believed in a state after death wherein the souls of the departed exist in happiness or misery, according to their deeds on earth.

Verse 24. *Moses said*] See Deut. xxv. 5. *If a man die, having no children, &c.*] This is not a literal quotation, but fairly represents the *sense* of the passage referred to. A similar law (or custom) existed long before the time of Moses; for we find it fully and rigidly in force during Jacob's life. (Gen. xxxviii.) It is therefore to be regarded as one of those prevalent usages

25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

which the law of Moses subjected to certain limitations and directions which did not previously exist. For instance, we see in the earlier case that the surviving brother had no choice but to marry the widow; but on his refusal, the next male relative might take her. This custom had its origin, doubtless, in the strong desire which existed among the Orientals for the perpetuation of the family name; and may have been formally adopted into the Mosaic code, because of its influence in preventing the family inheritance passing into other hands. The custom of marrying the brother's widow is now discontinued among the Jews, not being suited to the condition in which they are placed as a dispersed people without inheritance. Nothing, therefore, now remains among them of the original institution, except the ceremony of releasing both parties from a connection which is no longer permitted to be formed.—*Allen's Mod. Judaism*. By "brother" we are to understand the nearest male relative: and by "raising up seed to his brother," is meant, that the children of this marriage should be accounted as the children of the deceased. Customs analogous to that here noticed still prevail among several Eastern nations. Perhaps it ought to be stated, that in no other case was a Jew allowed to marry the widow of a deceased brother.

Verses 25-27. *There were with us seven brethren, &c.*] This is doubtless a supposed, not a real case: and is strongly put, in order to show the incompatibility, as they thought, of the doctrine of the resurrection with Scripture or reason. This difficulty arose, however, from

26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven ? for they all had her.

a misconception of the nature of that "life" which is to follow the resurrection of the dead : which misconception may have driven them to the denial of that future state of existence.

Verse 28. *In the resurrection*] Meaning, in the future state following the resurrection. *Whose wife shall she be*] From this it would seem, that the Sadducees argued that if there be any future state, it must bear some analogy to the present, as man would still possess the same appetites and passions which characterize him in the present life, and that consequently the relations which existed here would be perpetuated there : which, in the case stated, they justly thought would be impossible, for certainly the woman could not be wife to seven living husbands. From Luke xx. 34-36, it would seem that the Sadducees supposed that even allowing a future state, men would still be subject to death, and that consequently marriage would be necessary to the perpetuation of the species. It is not improbable that the erroneous opinions respecting the nature of the life to come which seem to have prevailed among the Jews generally, greatly contributed to the skepticism of the Sadducees. The Pharisees are said to have taught that in the resurrection state there would be marrying, feasting, &c.; and that the delights of Paradise would be greatly suited to man's *present* nature. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Sadducees should have deemed their supposed case an insuperable objection to the doctrine.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven.

Verse 29. *Ye do err*] In imagining that the same or similar relations will exist in the future as in the present life. *Not knowing the Scriptures*] Not understanding them. By "Scriptures," here, the books of the Old Testament are meant. These, properly interpreted, plainly reveal a future state of existence. See Isa. xxvi. 19; Dan. xii. 2, and elsewhere. *Nor the power of God*] To raise the dead freed from their former passions and affections. This "power" they had misconceived, inasmuch as they supposed that because men were affected by certain appetites in their present corporeal state, they must necessarily, if raised from the dead, be affected by the same passions in their future state of existence.

Verse 30. *In the resurrection*] Meaning, in the state to which the resurrection shall introduce them. *They—are as the angels of God*] This is, of course, spoken of the condition of the *righteous*—not of the future state of all men. By being "as the angels of God," is meant, freed from their present bodily appetites—neither marrying nor requiring marriage—and rendered immortal. Hence Luke (xx. 36) represents Christ as saying, "Neither can they die any more, but are equal unto," or "as," "the angels of God." "As our Lord here so fully lays down the doctrine that there is no marriage in heaven, it is plain that the opposite opinion had been generally entertained by the advocates of the resurrection; and, indeed, if not, it would have been mere impertinence for the Sadducees to have urged an objection which clearly had no relation to the doctrine as held by their

31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

opponents. Our Lord, therefore, not merely to silence them, but also to instruct his followers, draws the veil more fully from before that new and eternal state of being which shall succeed the general resurrection, discloses its exclusively *spiritual* character, and shuts out for ever those gross conceptions with which imagination has clothed its Pagan, Pharisaic, and Mohammedan paradises. It does not, however, follow from this exalted view of a future life, that we shall not recognise each other; nor that those tender intellectual affections which bind pious friends and relations to each other on earth shall not there exist. The contrary is indicated in many passages; only we are to recollect that every affection will be purged, not only from sin, but from infirmity."—*Watson*.

Verses 31, 32. *As touching the resurrection of the dead*] Luke has it, "that the dead are to be raised, even Moses showed." *Have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God*] The language referred to was addressed directly to Moses, at the burning bush, as may be seen Exod. iii. 1-4, 14; Mark xii. 26: it is, however, here said to be spoken to the Sadducees, because it was recorded for their benefit in common with that of others. *I am the God of Abraham, &c.*] The argument is this:—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had been long dead when these words were spoken: yet Jehovah says "*I am*," not *I was*, "the God of Abraham," &c.:—hence these patriarchs must still be conscious, living

33 And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine.

34 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

beings. Besides, the declaration, "I am their God," expresses a *covenant relation* existing between them and him, showing that he was not only the chosen object of their worship and trust, but stood engaged to fulfil to them all his promises. Now he had promised to these patriarchs the possession of Canaan; but they had never come into possession of it: whence it follows, either that the promises had failed, or that the earthly Canaan was typical of a heavenly inheritance; to enjoy which their bodies must be raised from the dead. And that this was the true import of the promise, so far as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were concerned, and that it was so understood by them, is manifest from Heb. xi. 9, 10, 13-16. In this argument, therefore, our Lord refutes the Sadducean notions that the soul expires with the body, and that the dead will not be raised up. Luke represents our Lord as adding that "all live unto him:" by which we understand him to mean, that not only Abraham, &c., but *all* the *righteous* dead, are considered by God as alive—are alive to him.

Verse 33. *The multitude—were astonished*] By his clear and convincing arguments. They saw and felt the propriety of his remarks, and viewed the subject in a more satisfactory light than ever before. Luke states, that "then certain of the scribes"—doubtless of the sect of the Pharisees—"said, Master, thou hast well said. And after that, they [the Sadducees] durst not ask him any question at all."

Verse 34. *But when the Pharisees had heard, &c.*]

35 Then one of them, *which was a lawyer*, asked *him a question*, tempting him, and saying,

36 Master, *which is the great commandment in the law?*

Rather, "But the Pharisees having heard," &c.—*Wesley*. *Were gathered together*] Campbell renders, "flocked about him," which gives a clearer sense; for, as he justly remarks, "it is the manifest design of the evangelist to acquaint us, that the preceding confutation of the Sadducees occasioned a concourse of the Pharisees to Jesus, which gave rise to the following conversation." It is not improbable that, much as they disliked the Sadducees, and glad as they might otherwise have been at their defeat, they now felt uneasy because of the increasing reputation it would give him among the people.

Verses 35, 36. *Then one of them, which was a lawyer*] That is, one skilled in the Mosaic law. Mark says, (xii. 28,) "one of the scribes, thus showing that the "lawyers" and "scribes" were the same persons. It may be inferred, from the statement in the preceding verse, that he was set on by the Pharisees, who seem not yet to have given up all hope of "entangling him in talk." *Tempting him*] Many commentators suppose that "tempting," here, simply means, *trying* him:—that is, the question is by them thought to have been put without any evil intention on the part of the querist. The commendation bestowed on him by our Lord (Mark xii. 34) strengthens this opinion. *Which is the great (or greatest) commandment of the law?*] Mark has it, "Which is the *first* commandment of all?"—by which he, however, evidently means, not "first" in order, but "first" in importance; thus substantially agreeing with Matthew. The "law," here, denotes not merely the ten

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

commandments, but, as generally in the New Testament, the five books of Moses. The Pharisees are said to have divided these precepts into "lesser" and "greater" commandments; but were not agreed among themselves as to which was "greatest." "Some," says Macknight, "declared that the law of sacrifices was the great commandment, because sacrifices are both the expiations of sin, and thanksgivings for mercies; others bestowed this honour on the law of circumcision, because it was the sign of the covenant established between God and the nation; a third sort yielded to the law of the sabbath; and there were some who affirmed the law of meats and washings to be of the greatest importance." The lawyer wished to know which of these opinions Christ deemed most correct; designing, probably, to contest the point with him, should the decision not be agreeable to his own views.

Verses 37-39. *Jesus said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*] Mark says that Jesus introduced his reply with a declaration of the unity of God:—"Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love," &c. The one gives only a part, the other the whole, of Christ's quotation. The passage is taken from Deut. vi. 4, 5. To "love the Lord with all the heart, soul, and mind"—Mark adds, "and strength"—is to give him the first place in our affections, and to devote to his service all our powers and faculties. The employment of so many terms is designed to give intensity and force to the precept. This is called "the first and great commandment,"

39 And the second *is like unto it*, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

because it embraces the sum of our duty to God, and is hence termed "the fulfilling of the law." Rom. xiii. 10. *And the second is like unto it*] Not *equal* to it, for the other is the "first" and "great" command; but "like," or *similar*, unto it, as being a precept enjoining love. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*] Quoted from Lev. xix. 18. By "neighbour," here, we are to understand every fellow-creature: and by the injunction to "love him *as*" ourself, that we love him with a *similar*, though perhaps not *equal*, affection. Indeed, we conceive it to be impossible for one man to love another in the *same degree* as he loves himself. We take the injunction to be of the same force as the precept, "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you." It would hence appear that our love to our "neighbour" is to be *sincere*, and to prompt us, not only to *wish* well to him, but to endeavour to *do him good*.

Verse 40. *On these two commandments*] The Jews are said to have numbered the precepts of the "law" at six hundred and thirteen; our Lord comprises the whole in *two* commands—the one affecting our duty to God, the other our duty to man. There is nothing forbidden but what offends against one or other of these laws, nothing enjoined but is implied in them. *Hang all the law and the prophets*] By "the law and the prophets," here, is meant, all the *moral* precepts contained in the "law" and the "prophetical books." This classification includes the whole of the Old Testament. These two commands are, as it were, the links which unite or bind

41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son of David.*

the whole moral code together. Mark, who is more full in his relation of this account than Matthew is, tells us that on receiving this answer the scribe observed, "Well, Master, thou hast said the truth," or answered truly: "for there is one God, and there is none other [God] but he; and to love him with all the heart is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices,"—that is, is more *acceptable* to him than are "burnt-offerings and sacrifices." Jesus, in reply, said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God:"—meaning, probably, that the expression of such views showed his mind to be almost ready for the reception of the gospel. The evangelist then states that "no man"—meaning no disputant or caviller—"after that durst ask him any question." So he had now silenced the Pharisees as well as the Sadducees.

Verses 41, 42. *While the Pharisees were gathered together*] Listening to his teachings, and probably waiting an opportunity to "catch him" in his talk. They were assembled in one of the courts of the temple. Mark xii. 35. *Jesus asked them, What think ye of Christ?* [Rather, of the Christ—the Messiah. *Whose son is he?*] Meaning, Whose son is it declared in the Scriptures that he should be? The latter part of this question explains the former; and shows that Jesus did not ask their opinion of the *character* of the Messiah, but simply of his *parentage*. *They say, The son of David*] "Son," here, means *descendant*. The Jews were universally of opinion that the Messiah would descend from David, the illustrious king of Israel: for proof that our Lord

43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in Spirit call him Lord, saying,

44 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?

did so descend, see the genealogical tables in Matt. i. and Luke iv.*

Verses 43-45. *How then*] In what sense—with what propriety? *Doth David in Spirit call him Lord*] Which he does Psalm cx. 1, whence this quotation is made. We thus positively learn that David was the author of this Psalm, and that the Messiah was its subject. From Christ's reply it would seem that he must have understood these Jews—no doubt correctly—as declaring their opinion that the Messiah would be a *mere* man: which idea manifestly fell short of the notion which David

* That the expected Messiah should be the son of David was universally acknowledged by the Jews, (see John vii. 42,) and is a most powerful proof that the Messiah is come. Their families are now so perfectly confounded that they cannot trace back their genealogies with any degree of certainty: nor have they been capable of ascertaining the different families of their tribes for more than sixteen hundred years. Why, then, should the Spirit of prophecy assert so often, and in such express terms, that Jesus was to come from the family of David, if he were to make his appearance when the public registers were all destroyed? Is it not evident that God designed that the Messiah should come at a time when the public genealogies might be inspected, to prove that it was He who was prophesied of, and that no other was to be expected? The evangelists Matthew and Luke were so fully convinced of the conclusiveness of this proof, that they appealed to the public registers; and thus proved to the Jews, from their own records, that Jesus was born of the family predicted by the prophets. Nor do we find that a scribe, Pharisee, or any other, ever attempted to invalidate this proof, though it would have essentially served their cause could they have done it. But, as this has not been done, we may fairly conclude it was impossible to do it.—*Clarke.*

45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

46 And no man was able to answer him a word;

entertained respecting him, and was totally irreconcilable with the text adduced. "In Spirit," means, under the influences, or by the inspiration, of the Holy Spirit, as appears clearly from St. Mark, who says that David spake "by the Holy Ghost." Mark xii. 36. As David terms the Messiah "Lord," it follows that he acknowledged him to be his superior: for it was not customary with the Hebrews to give this appellation to any but superiors. Being an independent monarch, however, David knew no superior but God; hence we conclude that the phrase is equivalent to an acknowledgment of Christ's divinity. *If David, &c.*] "If," here, has the sense of *since*, or *as*. *How is he his son?*] The argument is, how can the Messiah, if but a mere man, as you suppose, be both David's Lord and son? Equivalent to declaring that he could not be. Jesus is not to be understood as contesting the point that the Christ would be the "son" or descendant "of David," but as maintaining that he would be both this and something more—even David's Lord: which he could be only by possessing a divine and human nature. In confirmation of this view, see our Lord's declaration, Rev. xxii. 16. Christ's design in commencing this conversation was, doubtless, to correct the gross misconception of the Messiah's character and office entertained by the Pharisees, and the people generally: that so they might be led to abandon the long-cherished idea of a temporal kingdom, and seek to become the subjects of that spiritual dominion which he came to establish in the affections of men.

Verse 46. *No man was able to answer him*] Meaning, none of the Pharisees, with whom he was disputing.

neither durst any *man*, from that day forth, ask him any more *questions*.

But why were they "not able" to answer him? Because they perceived that the argument was conclusive against them. They saw that, in holding the Messiah to be a mere man, they had departed from the true meaning of their sacred books, which distinctly recognised him to be both a divine and human being; and that consequently they were mistaken in their conceptions of the nature of that dominion which "Messiah, the Prince," should establish among them. The silence of these Pharisees is, however, instructive to us. It shows that it was admitted among them that the words quoted related to the Messiah; so that the attempts of some of the more modern Jews to give them another application are in denial of the opinion of their ancestors. It shows, also, that the term "Lord" was not used by David, as the modern deniers of Christ's divinity assert it to have been, to express merely the office of the Messiah, so that with reference to the *dignity* of that office David might call him Lord, though his descendant, and a mere man like himself. For surely had this been the import of the word,—or were it, by any casuistry, susceptible of this interpretation,—the Jews would not have failed to avail themselves of it, and so have easily escaped from the difficulty of their position. But "they answered him not a word," and thus tacitly admitted his argument to be unanswerable.—*Watson*. *Neither durst any one, &c.*] This declaration is, probably, to be understood reflexively, as having allusion to the question of the lawyer, and Christ's answer, as contained in verses 34–40, which see. Our Lord's lucid exposition of the Psalmist's declaration must have had considerable effect upon the

LESSON VI.

[A. D. 29.]

Christ cautions his disciples against the example of the Pharisean scribes—He severely reproves the scribes and Pharisees for their hypocrisy, and other evil acts.—Matt. xxiii. 1-14; Mark xii. 38-40; Luke xx. 45-47.

MATT. xxiii. 1-14.

THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,
 2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

bystanders, for Mark says that the "common people," notwithstanding their regard for and attachment to their religious teachers, and the sympathy which they may be presumed to have entertained for them, "heard him gladly."

NOTES ON MATT. xxiii. 1-14.

Verse 1. *Then*] After correcting the notion of the Pharisees, that the Messiah should be a mere man. *Spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples*] All of whom had doubtless been interested listeners to the previous debates. Mark xii. 37. These were now the persons *particularly* addressed, though it would seem, from verse 13, that the Pharisees were still present.

Verse 2. *The scribes and the Pharisees*] That is, *such* of the Pharisees as were scribes; for as the Pharisees were a numerous sect, it is not to be supposed that they were *all* privileged to sit in Moses' seat. *Sit in Moses' seat*] This is a figurative expression, denoting that they exercised some such authority as Moses was formerly invested with—that they occupied, in some re-

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

spect, the place of Moses. But in what this authority consisted commentators are not agreed. Some refer it to their being the authorized teachers of religion; others refer it to the *judicial* character with which they contend the "scribes" were invested, as members of the various courts. May not both views be harmonized? Moses was certainly both the legislator and religious teacher of his people; and among the Jews, the office of the jurist and the theologian continued to be so blended, that it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between them. We therefore prefer to understand our Lord as speaking of the Pharisean scribes both in their civil and sacred character, to his speaking of them in either as separated from the other. The expression "sit," &c., may have allusion to the custom which prevailed among the Jewish teachers of *sitting* while engaged in the exposition of the law.

Verse 3. *All—they bid you observe—that do*] This must, we think, be taken with some restriction; and be understood to imply merely, all that they bid you observe *consistently with the law of Moses*. It is well known that much of their teaching was contrary to the true intent of the law: and some of their judicial acts—for instance, the expulsion from their communion of the man born blind, as related John ix. 34—give evidence of their being, at times, warped by their prejudices even in the administration of justice. So that neither as religious teachers nor as magistrates could the Saviour have designed to approve all their decisions, nor inculcate full and entire submission to them. *But do not after their*

4 For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.

works] That is, do not copy, or imitate, their conduct. From this it would seem that their lives were much more at variance with Moses' law than were their teachings or decisions. *They say, and do not*] Meaning, they teach you to regard as binding that which they neglect to practise themselves. Some commentators understand this to be spoken of the burdensome and expensive ceremonials of the Mosaic ritual, which these teachers, say they, failed to observe in their own case, though they strongly enforced their observance upon others. It will be recollected, however, that the Pharisees were exceedingly scrupulous in their attention to the *ceremonies* of their religion, and even, in some instances, went beyond the requirements of the law; (Matt. ix. 14; xxiii. 23; Luke xi. 11, 12; Acts xxvi. 5;) notwithstanding which the Saviour declares (Luke xi. 42) that they neglected "judgment and the love of God." Is it not probable, therefore, that by the expression, "they say, and do not," Christ is to be understood as declaring, that though they enjoined upon others obedience to moral duties, they were themselves grossly neglectful of them. This would furnish a sufficient reason why the people should "observe whatsoever they bade them," if agreeable to the true spirit of the Scriptures, "but not do after their works."

Verse 4. *They bind heavy burdens, &c.*] Meaning, they enjoin on their hearers, as duties, such inconvenient and wearisome observances as to render religion burdensome. The figure is said to be taken from the binding of a heavy load on a beast of burden. They bind on loads, as a bundle or bale on a pack-horse. By these

5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

burdens are meant the traditions of the elders.—*Bloomfield*. So, also, *Doddridge*, *Holden*, *Henry*, and others. *Watson* and *Barnes* understand our Lord to speak, *not* of these traditions, but of the *law itself*, which St. Peter (Acts xv. 10) describes as “a yoke which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear.” We think, however, that Jesus would not have spoken so disparagingly of “the law,” and therefore incline to the former opinion. *But they will not move them, &c.*] Some interpret this to mean that these Pharisees, however ready to impose religious burdens upon others, would not bear them themselves. Others take the sense to be, that however wearisome to the people their injunctions were, they would not abate their requirements. The latter appears to us to give the better sense; for the refusal to “move” these burdens would seem to intimate an objection to lightening the load which oppressed the heavy-laden disciple, though he were ready to sink under its weight.

Verse 5. *All their works*] Their religious “works”—such as their prayers, alms, and self-mortifications. *They do to be seen of men*] That is, to secure the praise and good opinion of men. *Make broad their phylacteries*] These “phylacteries” were small pieces of parchment or vellum, on which certain portions of the law were written; and were worn on the forehead and arm. It is thought that they had their origin in a too literal interpretation of Deut. vi. 5–8, where the Lord commands the Israelites to bind his law for a sign upon their hand, and as frontlets between their eyes—meaning thereby, that they should have it in continual remembrance: and

are supposed by Rosenmuller to have come into use after the return from the Babylonish captivity. No mention is made of them in the Old Testament. They are called in Hebrew *tephillin*, a word which signifies prayers, because the sentences of which they were composed were repeated in their devotions. The word "phylacteries" comes from the Greek, and signifies *to keep*, or *preserve*. This name was probably given to these scraps, either because they were designed to keep their possessor in mind of the law of God, or to preserve him, as amulets or charms were fancied to do, from the power of wicked spirits. Dr. A. Clarke describes a "phylactery" in his possession as being "about eighteen inches long, and an inch and a quarter broad. It is," says he, "divided into four unequal compartments: in the first is written the first ten verses of Exod. xiii.; in the second compartment is written verses eleven to sixteen of the same chapter; in the third, Deut. vi. 4-9; in the fourth, Deut. xi. 13-21, inclusive." These are stated by Jewish writers to be the passages uniformly employed for this purpose. The "phylactery" for the head is composed of four separate pieces of parchment, worn enclosed in a small leathern box, containing as many divisions; that for the arm is written on one piece, but marked off, as was the case with Dr. Clarke's, into four compartments, and also enclosed in a small box. These boxes are fastened to the head or arm by leathern straps; that for the head being tied behind in the form of the Hebrew letter \daleth (*daleth*), the cords of the strap being then brought forward and permitted to hang over each breast; that for the arm being twisted several times round the arm, and over one or more fingers. See the opposite engraving. Phylacteries are worn by the modern Jews only during



prayers.—*Allen's Mod. Judaism.* The Pharisees “made broad their phylacteries,”—that is, made them wider than they were generally worn, so as to attract the greater attention. They probably did this under pretence of greater respect for the law. *Enlarge the borders of their garments*] The word “borders,” here, denotes the “fringe” or tassel which God commanded the Israelites to wear suspended from each corner of their outer garments, in order that they might “look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them.” Num. xv. 38, 39. This command, unlike that which gave rise to the phylacteries, is susceptible only of a literal interpretation; hence we find that our Saviour, in common with all the men of his nation, wore this fringe. See Matt. ix, 20, where the word “hem” is to be understood of this “border.” These appendages the Pharisees wore larger than others, out of an affected superior regard for the law. The modern Jews, in compliance with this precept, are said to wear a small inner garment, called a *talleth* or *tsitseth*, composed of two square pieces of woollen cloth, “joined together at the upper edge by two fillets or broad straps, with a space left sufficient for the head to pass between them. These fillets rest on the shoulders, and the two square pieces hang down over the breast and back.” From each corner depends a fringe or tassel, made by passing four threads (one of which must, if possible, be blue) through an eyelet hole; thus forming eight ends, each tied with five knots. They have likewise, says Allen, (from whom the above is taken,) “a larger talleth, which they are required to put on during the daily morning prayers, and on some other occasions. This is a square piece of cloth resembling a shawl, made

6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

of wool, (sometimes of camel's hair,) and bordered with stripes of blue, with a fringe or tassel at each corner. The large talleth is, at the appointed seasons, thrown loosely over all the other garments; sometimes passing across the top of the head and flowing down over the upper part of each arm and over the back; sometimes wrapped round the neck; but more generally drawn together, and passing across the top of the head, and down over the fore part of each shoulder, like a scarf." Mark, in his account, represents our Lord as saying of these Pharisees, that they "love to go in long clothing;" meaning doubtless the long outer garment, reaching to the ankles, generally worn in the East by persons of distinction.

Verse 6. *Love the uppermost rooms, &c.*] This rendering does not, now, clearly express the sense of the original. Instead of "uppermost *rooms*," it should be the uppermost *places*, or *couches*, at the entertainment:—meaning thereby the most honourable ones.* This would be at the head of the table. For a notice of the manner of reclining at meals, and an illustrative cut, see on Luke vii. 38, vol. ii, pp. 123, 124. *Chief seats in the synagogues*] The "chief" or most honourable "seats in the synagogues" were those nearest the place where the sacred books were kept; and derived their fancied superiority from this fact, being hence accounted more holy. They were usually so arranged that their occupants sat with their backs to the sacred desk, and their faces to the people. It was here that the rulers and

* "When our translation of the Bible was made," says Holden, "room and place were synonymous terms."

7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren.

elders sat. By saying that the Pharisean scribes "loved" these "uppermost rooms" and "chief seats," our Lord probably meant, not only that they desired and were fond of them, but that they *sought* them. This was, doubtless, for the sake of the honour it gave them in the sight of men. They are, therefore, justly condemned.

Verse 7. *Greetings in the markets*] That is, in the public places. The "greetings" referred to were servile and ceremonious salutations, of which these vain-glorious men appear to have been exceedingly fond. *Rabbi, rabbi*] This word, which imports greatness or eminence—and, as here used, great or eminent *teacher*—was sometimes doubled in these "greetings," as a mark of distinguished consideration. So, also, with other high-sounding titles which they affected. From the injunctions contained in the following verses, it would seem that the appellations "father" and "master" were also assumed by the scribes and given by the people; and that not as matter of mere courtesy, but as an acknowledgment of *the authority of their instructions*: for they claimed that "the words of the rabbies"—meaning, we presume, those of the leading rabbies—"were the words of God." To this arrogance our Lord objects.

Verse 8. *But be not ye called Rabbi*] Meaning, probably, allow not yourselves to be, *in this sense*, called rabbi. *For one is your Master*] Or Instructor: and they were but his servants or pupils. This fact, which furnishes a sufficient reason why they should not claim to be "masters," they were unhesitatingly to avow.

Although the apostles were the commissioned, authorized teachers of Christ's doctrine, they came not as *masters*, but as *servants*. They did, indeed, authoritatively declare the terms of salvation; though not in their own name, as of right, but in the name and under the influence of Him who sent them. And although they had the power to "remit" and "retain" the sins of men, it was only as the agents and under the direction of that Spirit which was imparted unto them to guide them "into all truth." Not so with the Jewish teachers:—they assumed authority to set up their traditions and fanciful expositions to be the true interpretation of the Scriptures; the requirements of which they thus, in many instances, subverted. *Even Christ*] Rather, "*the Christ*," or the Messiah. These words are said to be omitted in several ancient manuscripts; but, as Campbell observes, their retention or omission makes no difference in the sense; because, if not inserted, the context manifestly suggests them. *Ye are brethren*] And may not, therefore, arrogantly assume superiority one over another. This declaration does not, however, imply that there is to be no official superiority among the ministers or followers of Christ: it merely condemns an ambitious seeking to become distinguished as the head or founder of a sect or party. The disposition which leads one to boast, "I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas," is contrary to the spirit of Christianity, for it seeks to glorify the creature, instead of the Creator. How much more, then, is the desire to become a *leader* or *head* of a party to be condemned? Neither do we suppose our Lord to condemn the practice of conferring honourable testimonials on those who have distinguished themselves for learning, or for devotion to the well-being of man, or the promo-

9 And call no *man* your father upon the earth : for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

tion of the truth of God. The possession of such degrees may sometimes result in good, and need never be productive of harm. The Christian may not, it is true, unduly desire these honours; and if they be bestowed, they should be worn with meekness and humility.

Verse 9. *Call no man your father, &c.*] This prohibition does not forbid the giving this title to a parent; for both Scripture and the example of Christ sanction its usage. Neither does Jesus condemn the custom of thus addressing aged persons—especially if eminent for piety and usefulness—"fathers in Israel"—nor those by whose instrumentality we may have been begotten in the gospel, as a sign of courtesy and respect. *Exod. xx. 12; 2 Kings ii. 12; vi. 21; Matt. xix. 29; 1 John ii. 13.* The admonition is to be understood as forbidding that blind and unequivocal submission to religious teachers which the leading scribes claimed of their disciples. They arrogated, it is said, the title of "fathers," as the *authoritative* instructors and spiritual guides of their followers, whom they termed sons: while the people regarded them with a degree of reverence due only to God. "The wise men," say the Jews, "are the fathers of us all." It seems to be this implicit reliance on, and unqualified submission to, mere men as spiritual instructors, that is here condemned. *One is your Father*] Namely, God: who is to be regarded as the Father of mankind, as having brought them into existence: (*Mal. ii. 10:*) and who is also, in a yet higher and more endearing sense, the "Father" of them that believe in Christ. *John i. 12, 13.*

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ.

11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

Verse 10. *Neither be ye called masters*] The original, here rendered "masters," would, it is said, be better translated *leaders* or *guides*; "that is," says Benson, "of the judgments and consciences of men."

Verse 11. *He that is greatest, &c.*] "These words may either imply a promise that such should be accounted greatest, and stand highest in the favour of God, who should be most humble, submissive, and serviceable; or, a precept enjoining the person who should be advanced to any place of dignity, trust, or honour in the church, to consider himself as peculiarly called thereby, not to be a lord, but a minister, and to serve others in love. Thus Paul accounted himself 'servant of all;' (1 Cor. ix. 19;) and our Lord added to his many precepts on this subject, the weight of his own continual example." By thus teaching that true greatness lies in self-abasement, and honour in becoming the servant of all, our Lord strikes at the root of that vanity and pride which led the Jewish rabbies to assume these appellations.

Verse 12. *Whosoever shall exalt himself*] Meaning, shall *seek* to "exalt himself," as did the vain-glorious scribes. To "exalt" ourself is to extol or magnify our own merits or importance. *Shall be abased*] Shall be degraded or brought down, from that fancied elevation to which he had exalted himself. *He that shall humble himself*] To "humble" ourself is to entertain lowly thoughts of our ability, importance, &c., and

13 But wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men : for

to act in accordance with these views. *Shall be exalted*] Shall be held in high estimation—probably by his fellows, certainly by God. This abasing the self-exalted, and exalting the self-abased, is, says Mr. Watson, “the standing rule of the divine administration. It often appears conspicuously in God’s dispensations to individuals and to nations; and an attentive observer will see it perhaps more uniformly illustrated by facts than any other principle of God’s moral government in the present life.” That our Lord attached much importance to this doctrine may be inferred from the fact that he frequently introduced it into his discourses, and strongly insisted upon obedience to it.

Verse 13. *Wo unto you, scribes, &c.*] This sentence is not to be understood as an imprecation or invoking of evil upon the “scribes;” but as a plain, yet compassionate, declaration of the “wo”—the misery and wretchedness—which should come upon them, unless they repented and became his followers. So, also, with the remaining denunciations. The acts which called forth this solemn and appalling declaration are specified in this and the following verses. It is probable that the language was addressed to those scribes and Pharisees with whom Jesus had been disputing, as stated Matt. xxii. 34–46, and Mark xii. 28–37, and who may be safely presumed to have been still present. *Hypocrites*] These persons were called “hypocrites,” because, though making high pretensions to superior piety, their lives were wicked. *Ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men*] By “kingdom of heaven,” here, is meant the spi-

ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

ritual dominion of Christ, into which men are brought by the preaching of the gospel, and compliance with its requirements. The entrance to this "kingdom" the "scribes and Pharisees" had "shut up," or closed, by their perversion of the moral requirements of God, by their making religion to consist, chiefly, in mere outward ceremonies, and especially by their erroneous interpretation of the prophecies relating to it. "Against men," means to the exclusion of men. The expression is of similar import to our phrase of shutting the door in one's face, in order to prevent admission into the house. On a previous occasion (Luke xi. 52) our Lord had charged the scribes with "taking away the key of knowledge," so that the people had become almost universally ignorant of the true import of their scriptures, especially of the more spiritual, and consequently the more important, portions of them. We may learn from this how to estimate the value of an enlightened and pious ministry. If the teachers be ignorant of the way of life—have not experienced the power of the Holy Ghost—whatever other qualifications they may possess, they are incompetent to teach religious truth: instead of *opening*, they will absolutely "shut up," the "kingdom of heaven." *Ye neither go in yourselves*] No, for they would not have Christ to rule over them. *Neither suffer ye them that are entering*] Or, *endeavouring* to enter. The hinderance referred to is not to be understood of legal enactments, nor, perhaps, in a general way, of open dissuasion; but rather, we think, to the insidious effect of false doctrine. A man's opinions exert a strong influence

14 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

upon his acts; and his religious character will be formed by his religious views. If these views be defective, he will come short of the requirements of God, and may miss of heaven. How important, then, that men be furnished with correct instruction! From our Lord's statement it would seem that many of the people sincerely desired to embrace the truth—to enter into “the kingdom of heaven”—but were led astray by the teachings or example of these scribes.

Verse 14. *Ye devour widows' houses*] Meaning, Ye defraud them of their substance; probably under some religious pretext. A “widow” is one whose husband is dead: and she is hence generally supposed to be an object of compassionate regard. The law required that such should be dealt with mercifully, and denounced severe judgments against those who should oppress them. Exod. xxii. 22; Deut. xxvii. 19; Isa. i. 17. *And for a pretence*] For the sake of appearance—under the pretext of religion; Luke says, (xx. 47,) “for a show.” *Make long prayer*] Lightfoot tells us that one rule with these “hypocrites” was, to spend an hour in meditation, another in prayer, and then another in meditation. This was, we presume, in public—either at the temple or in one of the synagogues. Those among them who made pretensions to uncommon sanctity did this three times a day. *Therefore*] Because they did this out of mere pretence—not on account of their making long prayer. Neither length nor shortness of prayer is censured or approved. *Ye shall receive the greater damnation*] Meaning, perhaps, be doomed to severer punishment in

LESSON VII.

[A. D. 29.

Christ's denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees continued—He applauds the liberality of a poor widow.
 Matt. xxiii. 15-39; Mark xii. 41-44; Luke xxi. 1-4.

MATT. xxiii. 15-39.

WO unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte;

the future world than they would have been but for their hypocrisy. The making religion a cloak to cover evil designs is extremely repugnant to all the better feelings of our nature, and must be very abhorrent to God. And being so, he will visit it with the severer penalty.

NOTES ON MATT. xxiii. 15-39.

Verse 15. *Ye compass sea and land*] This is a proverbial expression, denoting the putting forth the most strenuous and pains-taking exertions for the accomplishment of an object; and is of similar import to our phrase of "leaving no stone unturned." *To make one proselyte*] A "proselyte" is one who comes over to a sect or party—a convert; and among the Jews the term was employed to denote a convert from heathenism to Judaism. The law of Moses with respect to such was, that they should be "as those born in the land,"—that is, be reckoned as Jews. Exod. xii. 48. That great zeal was shown by the later Jews, both in Palestine and in all the Greek and Roman cities where they were established, to win the Gentiles from the worship of idols to the service of the one true God, appears from various circumstances, and the statements of many writers; and that they succeeded to some extent is shown from the Acts of the

and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves.

Apostles, where we see that many of these Gentile proselytes were among the first to receive the gospel in several principal cities. Nor are we confined to the sacred historians for proofs of this fact. Horace, in the fourth satire of his first book, notices it in language which is thus translated by Francis—

“We’ll force you, like the proselyting Jews,
To be like us.”

And Bloomfield states that this ardour for proselyting became, at length, so prevalent and extensive, that it was forbidden by law. “This zeal,” says Mr. Watson, “appears in many to have been a very pious one, and to have given rise to efforts which God was pleased to crown with success, so that the light of the Old Testament scriptures and of religion was largely diffused through the civilized world, and signally served to prepare the way for the diffusion of Christianity.” This, however, was not the case—at least not to the same extent—in Judea; where the teachers seem to have been more influenced by the desire to add to the number of their followers, than that their converts should be instructed in true piety. *When he is made*] Is thus proselyted—has renounced heathenism and embraced the Jewish faith. *Two-fold more*] Twice as much, at least in appearance, if not in reality. *The child of hell than yourselves*] “Child of hell,” here, is probably a Hebrew idiom, or form of speech, for one manifesting a Satanic or hellish disposition—an ungodly person. That this was the case with these proselytes may doubtless be attributed to the fact, that these scribes and Pharisees

16 Wo unto you, *ye blind guides*, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

seem to have been more influenced by a desire to add to their numbers than to be of real benefit to their converts. Hence the former erroneous notions and wicked habits of these proselytes were left, in a great measure, uncorrected; and low, mistaken ideas of God and his service were instilled into their minds. Especially may they be presumed to have been filled with uncharitable zeal, and with the dangerous belief that ceremonious observances were of more importance than a holy life. No wonder, then, that their lives were irreligious. But that our Lord is to be understood as declaring them to be more guilty and deserving of punishment than were their teachers, may, we think, be questioned.

Verse 16. *Ye blind guides*] Guides that lead astray; referring not so much to their ignorance, as to their wilful and perverting casuistry, especially (as appears from what follows) in the sacred matter of oaths: thus ensnaring the consciences of men, and, by confounding the distinctions of right and wrong, making even conscience an ally of vice, which is the most hopeless state into which men can fall. *Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing*] Meaning, whosoever shall take an oath "by the temple," need not consider his vow binding. It was customary among the Jews to swear by a great variety of objects. These oaths the scribes divided into two classes, great and small; the former of which they considered binding, the latter not so. Among the former were included things offered to God; among the latter, the temple, altar, head, &c.

17 *Ye* fools, and blind ! for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold ?

The reason of this was, that they might inculcate the idea that peculiar sanctity attached to these gifts to the temple, and so heighten the supposed meritoriousness of presenting them. *But whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple*] Not the gold with which the walls and ceilings are said to have glittered, but the gold offered as “corban,” or *gifts devoted to God*. See Mark vii. 11. The peculiar holiness of gifts for sacred uses, and the binding nature of the oaths made by them, was held also by the Greeks and Romans. *He is a debtor*] Meaning, he is bound by his oath—is under obligation to fulfil it. “These corrupt teachers made similar distinctions between swearing by the altar and that which was offered upon it; by heaven, and God himself; but our Lord declares that every oath, every appeal to any object whatever for the truth of what is affirmed, is, in fact, an appeal to God, the judge and witness of men, and the sure avenger of deceit and perjury.”—*Watson*. Hence every oath, in itself lawful, is equally binding.

Verse 17. *Whether is greater*] Meaning, which is more sacred—to be held in higher veneration? *The gold, or the temple that sanctifieth*] To “sanctify,” is, in this sense, to cause to be accounted holy. Of itself, this gold had no holiness; but the fact of its being devoted to the temple service caused it to be esteemed sacred. So with the temple itself; it was called a “holy house;”—not because it possessed, in itself, any more sanctity than any other building, but because it was set apart to a holy purpose—the worship of God: and in order to render that worship the more impressive, a degree of holiness is ascribed to the house, from reve-

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

19 *Ye fools, and blind!* for whether *is* greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by Him that dwelleth therein.

rence of the Being there served. If there *had been* any difference in the sanctity of the two objects, most assuredly the temple would have been, as shown by Christ, the more sacred: he is not, however, to be understood as asserting this to be the case, but merely as showing, on their own premises, the fallacy of the opinion held by the scribes. The argument is of the same nature as that used by Paul, Heb. vii. 7, to establish the superiority of Melchisedec over Abraham—"the less is blessed of the greater."

Verse 18. *By the altar*] The altar of burnt-offerings, which stood in the court of the priests, front of the temple. In Solomon's day this was of brass, but in the time of Josephus it seems to have been built of stone. On this altar were offered all the animals that were sacrificed to God. *The gift that is upon it*] Meaning, the sacrifice there offered. *He is guilty*] The marginal reading says, *is debtor, or bound*. The original is the same in this and at the close of the sixteenth verse.

Verses 20-22. *By all things thereon*] And by inference, by Him to whom they are offered; for no one would think of swearing by an inanimate object, which could neither reward if the vow were kept, nor punish if it were broken. The very nature of an oath supposes an appeal to one who hears, judges, and will approve

22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

23 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have

or condemn, as the case may be. *Him that dwelleth therein*] Namely, God. This phraseology is probably used because, in the first or Solomon's temple, the Almighty gave a *visible* manifestation of his presence. Comp. Exod. xxv. 21, 22, and Num. vii. 89, with Psalm lxxx. 1. He is now present in the assemblies of his people in a *spiritual*, not visible manner. Dr. A. Clarke, Bloomfield, and some others, say that this verse should not read "*Him that dwelleth*," or *inhabiteth*, but "*Him that dwelt*," or *did inhabit*. *Throne of God*] The heavens are frequently so termed, as being the place where the divine Majesty is peculiarly manifested.

Verse 23. *Ye pay tithe*] "*Tithe*" means *tenth*—the tenth part. The law required the Israelites to consecrate one-tenth of their income to the Lord; partly as an acknowledgment of his sovereignty, and partly as a provision for the support of the Levites. Comp. Lev. xxvii. 32, with Num. xviii. 24. See further on Luke xviii. 12, vol. iii, pp. 284–286. The Pharisees affected to be so scrupulous in their observance of this law, that they rigorously enjoined and practised the payment of the tax on the most insignificant herbs, which it is said the law did not contemplate. "It was, indeed, a common saying of the Jews," remarks the Pictorial Bible, "that the tithing of corn was from the law, but the tithing of herbs was from the rabbins: the obligation of rendering this tithe was, however, not considered the less imperative on that account." *Mint*] The "*mint*," from its frequent use in domestic economy and medicine, seems to have

omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

been somewhat extensively cultivated. From Jewish writers we also learn that, on account of its agreeable scent, it was frequently strewn on the floor of the synagogues. *Anise*] The original is said to denote, not "anise," but *dill*. "Dill" is a plant of a warm taste and aromatic smell: and appears from the Jewish writers to have been eaten raw, as a salad. The *seeds* of the plant are now occasionally employed for medicinal purposes. *Cummin*] "This is an umbelliferous [bell-shaped] plant, closely allied in structure and properties to the coriander and carraway."—*Pict. Bible*. "Its seeds have a bitterish, warm taste, accompanied with an aromatic flavour, not of the most agreeable kind."—*Harris*. It is not to be supposed that these three were the only herbs from which tithes were taken: for Luke, on another occasion, (chap. xi. 42,) represents the Saviour as saying to the Pharisees, "Ye tithe mint, *and rue, and all manner of herbs*." Those noticed are therefore to be understood as *samples*; a part being taken for the whole. *Omitted*] Neglected—disregarded. *The weightier matters of the law*] The words "weightier matters" denote the more important duties prescribed by God for their observance: the expression may have been used by Christ in allusion to the distinction made by the rabbins of "weighty" and "light" commands in the law. *All* the divine injunctions are "weighty," though some are doubtless more so than others. *The practical* duties of piety, for instance, are more acceptable to God than mere ceremonial observances. The Jewish teachers had, however, reversed this order, and made the essentials

24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

of religion to consist in external rites. They assumed the garb of sanctity; and claimed to be, and were generally regarded as, exceedingly devout persons; but neglected to cultivate those moral habits and affections, without the possession of which all religious professions are but a vain show. In this they acted hypocritically. *Judgment*] Justice, uprightness—the giving to all their rights. *Mercy*] Compassion, pity—leading to the relief of the distressed. *Faith*] Devout confidence in, and obedience to, God. From this passage men may learn, that unless they are *just* in their dealings; *merciful*, according to their ability; and exercise *faith* toward God, they will fail of that completeness of character unto which it is their privilege and duty to attain, and which alone will secure to them at the great day an “inheritance among them that are sanctified.” Seek, then, “the mind of Christ.” *These ought ye to have done*] These duties—“judgment, mercy, and faith”—ye ought to have practised. *Not leave the other undone*] Our Lord does not, then, condemn the payment of those tithes—on the contrary, he rather seems to have approved it: but he does condemn, and that severely, their neglect of the “weightier” matters of the law, and their hypocrisy, in cloaking their practical infidelity by an external observance of the duties of religion.

Verse 24. *Strain at a gnat*] Rather, “strain out a gnat,”—namely, from their wines or liquors. “At,” here, is doubtless a typographical blunder, first made in the edition put forth by authority of King James I., in the year 1611, and perpetuated in all subsequent edi-

tions, though universally admitted to be an error. Archbishop Parker's Bible, edition of 1568, reads "strain out," as also does Barker's, printed during the reign of Elizabeth, and bearing date 1599. That "out" is the true reading will also appear from the fact that the Greek word rendered "strain" does not mean *to make an effort to swallow*, but to *filtrate*, as through a cloth; and alludes to the custom of filtering wine, to free it from the insects which may either have fallen into, or been bred in it. It was usual with the ancients generally, as well as with the Jews, to filter their liquors; the former, however, did this from delicacy, while the latter acted under the additional incentive of religious principle: for the law pronounced such insects "unclean." See Lev. xi. 21-23, 41. On this subject the rabbins, as usual, refined very much, as we may see from the following extract from the Talmud:—"One that eats a flea or a gnat is an apostate; and is no more to be counted one of the congregation." Hence their solicitude to exclude the smallest insect from drinks. *And swallow a camel*] By "camel," here, some understand an insect larger than the "gnat," which they suppose may have been termed "camel," from its form bearing some resemblance to that of the quadruped so called. It is much better, however, to regard the expression as hyperbolical, and by "camel" to understand the animal commonly so termed: and which, as well as the "gnat," was declared to be "unclean." Lev. xi. 4. Unless this view be adopted, the force of the figure is very much weakened, if not entirely destroyed: for its design is to show that these scribes and Pharisees were exceedingly scrupulous about little matters—apparently afraid of committing the smallest fault, but unhesitatingly practising the grossest immoralities. It is

25 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26 *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

said by Wetstein that this very antithesis was used by both Jewish and Greek writers. The force of the word rendered "swallow," here, is said to be well expressed by our own homely phrase of "*bolt* or *gulp* down."

Verse 25. *Ye make clean the outside of the cup and platter, &c.*] Meaning, that they preserved a fair exterior—were *outwardly* righteous, but *inwardly* defiled. They were as men who are careful that the *outer* surface of the vessels from which they eat or drink should be clean, but who leave the *inside*—the more important part, as being that which comes in immediate contact with their food—in a filthy condition. The justice of this charge will appear from the fact that the Pharisees were scrupulously careful of external and ceremonial purity—practising all the prescribed ablutions with due attention, and maintaining a fair show of piety; but "within" they were "full of extortion and excess"—that is, their souls were polluted by *rapine* and *injustice*.

Verse 26. *Thou blind Pharisee*] In what respect is the Pharisee here termed "blind?" We presume, in supposing that the "form of godliness," though destitute of its "power," would recommend him to the favour of God. *Cleanse first that which is within*] The soul or heart. *That the outside may be clean also*] Meaning, *then will* "the outside be clean also." It is the state of the heart—of the moral affections—which deter-

27 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! for ye are like unto whitened sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

mines the man's character ; and if these be right, his outward deportment will be correct.

Verses 27, 28. *Ye are like whitened sepulchres, &c.]* A "sepulchre" is a grave or tomb. It was customary with the Jews to whitewash the exterior of their tombs once a year, in order to guard the passer-by from pollution by touching them ; for contact with a dead body, or with a tomb, caused ceremonial defilement. Num. xix. 16. " This whitening, we learn, extended as far on the surface of the ground as the vault reached under ground."

—*Bloomfield.* Over the graves (unless the sepulchres were formed in the side of a hill) it was customary to erect monuments, which being preserved with care, and kept white, must have had a pleasing effect. Probably no nation ever manifested more suitable care for, or attachment to, the remains of their deceased friends than the Jews. And there is something inexpressibly touching in the reply of the captive Nehemiah, when questioned by his royal master as to his sadness :—" Why should not my countenance be sad," said he, "*when the place of my fathers' sepulchres lieth waste ?*" Neh. ii. 3. With a feeling of respect and veneration analogous to this, the Jews, it is said by Hyam Isaacs, never reopen a grave that is known to have contained a corpse. Comparatively " beautiful," however, as these whitened monuments might appear, they were still but the coverings of corruption. *Even so ye, &c.]* The similitude lies not in

29 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

the outward appearance, but in the inward state of the things compared. As the sepulchre was within "full of dead men's bones, and all uncleanness," so also were these persons "full of hypocrisy and iniquity." And as the one was to be shunned through fear of ceremonial defilement, so the other was to be guarded against, on account of their disseminating moral contagion.

Verse 29. *Because ye build the tombs of the prophets*] Jesus is not to be understood as here upbraiding the scribes and Pharisees "because" of their building (or repairing) these tombs, but "because" of their hypocrisy, in that, though they professed so high a veneration for the character of the prophets, they paid so little attention to their precepts. The practice of building monuments to perpetuate the memory of the illustrious dead was by no means peculiar to the Jews, but was in vogue among all civilized nations of antiquity, and is common at the present day. Of this nature, we presume, were the "tombs" here referred to: which were doubtless placed over the real or supposed grave of him whose name they bore. That the sepulchre of at least one of the prophets—David—was at this time known at Jerusalem, we have the testimony of Peter, Acts ii. 29. *Garnish*] Ornament, embellish. By "the righteous," here, we understand the prophets above alluded to to be meant. By thus building and embellishing these "tombs," as well as by their explicit avowal, (verse 30,) the scribes and

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

Pharisees ostentatiously professed a strong esteem for the prophets, and condemned the acts of their fathers in rejecting them and causing their death.

Verse 31. *Wherefore*] Rather, *so then*. *Ye be witnesses unto yourselves*] Ye bear testimony to yourselves—your consciences tell you. *Ye are the children of them which killed the prophets*] By “children,” here, our Lord does not mean that they were the *descendants* of them “that killed the prophets”—but that they *resembled them in habits and dispositions*—were *like* them, and *imitators* of their conduct. He alludes to the fact of their being at this very time engaged in plotting his death. See further on Luke xi. 47, 48, vol. iii, pp. 87, 88.

Verse 32. *Fill ye up, then, the measure of your fathers*] Meaning, the measure of your fathers’ sins. This language seems to imply that there is a certain height to which the iniquity of nations is permitted by God to rise. To fill up this measure is seldom the work of one age. Successive generations adopt the principles, and imitate the practices, of their ancestors, adding “sin to sin, and iniquity to iniquity,” until, either by the natural consequence of such public vices as tend to subvert the strength and security of society, or the special visitations of divine vengeance, now no longer corrective, but in the strictest sense penal, they receive the full award of their sins. The punishment of *individuals* may be deferred to another life; but *nations* have no existence but in time, and in this life, therefore, are rewarded according to their works. True, God will bear long with them; but when that point is once reached beyond which it is

33 *Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?*

inconsistent with the character of a wise and righteous government, though founded in mercy, to extend impunity, *the measure is full*, and the terribleness of the judgments of God proves to all the world that none ever hardened his heart against God and prospered. This measure was filled up by the Jews in rejecting the offers of mercy made them by the publication of the gospel after the day of Pentecost. Many, indeed, of the nation were gathered into the Christian church, but the majority spurned Christianity with contempt.—*Bloomfield and Watson*. Some commentators understand the words, *Fill ye up, then, &c.*, in the imperative, implying *that they would fill up* this measure: but it seems much better to understand them as expressing *hopeless abandonment*. “The case of this class of men had become desperate; they had set themselves to resist all conviction; and now, after repeated warnings and calls, they are utterly renounced by Christ, and surrendered to the power of their sins. The expression is therefore most natural, and indicates strong emotion. It is as though he had said, “Go, *since ye are yourselves wilfully bent upon it*; and since ye reject all counsel, and condemn every effort to bring you to a better mind, fill up the measure of your fathers: ye have rejected me, and I now solemnly and judicially reject you.” Our Lord, in these words, intimates the punishment of the Jewish nation, of which the scribes and Pharisees were, to a considerable extent, the ecclesiastical leaders.

Verse 33. *Ye serpents*] A serpent is an image of a crafty and hurtful man—and it was probably on account of the cunning malignity of these persons, and the inju-

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify; and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city:

rious tendency of their teaching, that Jesus thus termed them. *Generation of vipers*] Rather, *offspring* of vipers. This expression is of similar import with the former. The Saviour, we presume, thus strongly expressed his knowledge of these men's characters, with the benevolent intention of putting his auditors on their guard respecting them, that they might no longer drink in the poison of their erroneous instructions, or copy their faulty example. The use of such language by him, or by his inspired messengers, in reproving sinners, affords, however, no precedent for the employment of harsh terms by us. The minister of the gospel is to deal plainly, but kindly and persuasively, with men. *How shall ye escape*] Meaning, they could not escape—if they continued the conduct they were then pursuing. *The damnation of hell*] The condemnation or punishment of [gehenna] *the fire of hell*. This language *figuratively* denotes the tremendousness of that visitation which should overwhelm their nation, and especially their chief city, in unheard-of calamities; and *literally*, the punishment to which they individually rendered themselves obnoxious in a future life.

Verse 34. Our Lord here proceeds to show the manner in which the nation would fill up the measure of its guilt—namely, by their rejection of the gospel, and abuse of its messengers. *Wherefore, I send you prophets, &c.*] Meaning, that he *would* send—*was about to* send. By “prophets, wise men, and scribes,” the apostles and other messengers of Christ are meant; and these appel-

35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

lations are given them because they were the names by which the teachers of religion were known among the Jews. *Some of them ye shall kill, &c.*] Rather, *will* kill. This prediction was literally fulfilled, as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles. Stephen and James were put to death; (Acts vii. 59; xii. 1, 2;) Peter and others were scourged; (chap. v. 40;) on account of the persecutions which arose many were scattered abroad; (viii. 1, 3;) and though we have no *account* that any were "crucified" by them, we need not conclude that no such occurrence took place, for in so brief a history every event could not be registered. The silence of the sacred historian is, therefore, no evidence against the supposition that some such martyrdoms may have occurred. The word rendered "wherefore," in the commencement of the verse, would, in the estimation of many critics, be better translated *moreover*. It does not import that Jesus would send his messengers to heighten the guilt or bring on the condemnation of the impenitent Jews, but is a mere form of transition from one topic to another.

Verse 35. *That upon you may come all the righteous blood, &c.*] The word rendered "that" often expresses *the consequence*, rather than *the design*, of an action: so here. The words, "upon you may come," &c., are not to be understood as importing that the Jews of that age should be held answerable for all the "righteous blood"—or blood of all the righteous persons—which had been shed by their ancestors, for this would be

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

manifestly unjust, but that they would be *as severely punished for their iniquities* AS IF *the guilt* of shedding all that blood were laid to their charge. Temporal judgments often descend on children in consequence of the sin of their parents; a principle of the divine government expressly laid down in the words, "visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." Exod. xx. 5. *Zacharias, son of Barachias*] This is probably the high-priest Zechariah, son of Jehoiada, who was put to death by King Joash, as mentioned 2 Chron. xxiv. 20-22. The seeming discrepance of his being in one place called "son of Jehoiada," and in the other, "of Barachias," may be readily accounted for on the supposition that his father had borne both names. Instances of persons bearing two names, by either of which they were indifferently called, are furnished, probably in the case of the father of Kish, who seems to have been alike designated by the name of "Abiel" and of "Ner," (comp. 1 Sam. ix. 1 with 1 Chron. viii. 33,) and certainly in that of the evangelist Matthew, who was known also as "Levi." Matt. ix. 9; Luke v. 27. The words, "upon the earth," are rendered by Dr. A. Clarke, *upon this land*;—by which he understands the land of Judea. *All these things shall come, &c.*] Meaning, probably, that a judgment as severe as would be due to the perpetration of all these crimes would come upon them. The expression is therefore to be understood as denoting the magnitude of their punishment. See further on Luke xi. 50, 51, vol. iii, pp. 89, 90.

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

Verse 37. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, &c.*] The whole of this apostrophe abounds with feeling and beauty. The repetition of the word Jerusalem, denoting how intensely the mind was fixed upon an object of interest,—the comparison of his own intense desire for their salvation to the restless anxiety of the parent bird to shelter under her wings her brood from the ravages of birds of prey,—the allusion to the earnestness and frequency of his warnings, and of his calls to repentance,—and the despairing conclusion, *Ye would not!*—are all deeply touching. For three years had Christ been endeavouring, by entreaties, admonitions and threatenings, to allure the Jews to sincere repentance and faith; with the benevolent design of guarding them from the wrath of God, which he saw would fall on them unless averted by timely penitence. The expression of our Saviour's compassion is not, however, to be confined to the Jews. He would also gather *us* to himself and be *our* eternal refuge from the vengeance which we have provoked. "*I would,*" and "*ye would not,*" are words which at once declare the fulness of his grace, and place the sole fault of the final destruction of men upon themselves alone.—*Watson.* See notes on Luke xiii. 34, vol. iii, pages 177–179.

Verses 38, 39. *Your house is left desolate*] Meaning, *is about to be made desolate—to be laid waste*:—allusion seems to be here had to the ruin caused by the

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Romans. The word "house," here, is supposed by some to denote the *temple*; by others, the *metropolis*; and by others, the *whole nation*; for the original term is used in all these senses: and in each and all of them was the prediction verified. Mr. Watson is of opinion that these words were quoted by Christ from Jer. xxii. 5, "But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith the Lord, that *this house shall become a desolation*; which," says he, "is another indication that the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and the deportation of the people from the land, were a type of the still severer punishment inflicted by Roman severity." *For I say*] Jesus was now about closing his (apparently) last *public* discourse:—the remainder of his instructions seem to have been uttered in the hearing of his disciples only. *Ye shall not see me henceforth, &c.*] The same original words as are here rendered "henceforth," are, in Matt. xxvi. 64, translated *hereafter*. Several critics think that their meaning in this place is, *after a while*: "Ye shall not after a while see me till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh," &c.,—that is, till ye joyfully acknowledge me to be the Messiah. This *coming* is probably to be understood in a spiritual sense; if so, the words contain "a remarkable instance of a threatening and a promise, each of the most emphatic import, being couched under the same terms. A long and dark interval was to take place in which they should not *see* him, have no perception of the truth of his mission, and be separated from his peculiar mercies,—a long night in which they should wander in ignorance and unbelief,

MARK xii. 41-44

41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

denationalized, unchurched, and deserted by God; but still ultimately they shall *see* him in all the demonstrations of his divinity and redeeming offices; shall acknowledge him as the true Christ; and take up that very acclamation of the multitudes in the streets of Jerusalem at which their fathers were maddened into rage, and cry with them, 'Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord!'"

MARK xii. 41-44.

Verse 41. *Jesus sat over against the treasury*] By "treasury," here, is meant that part of the second court of the temple commonly called "court of the women," in which were placed the chests for the reception of the voluntary contributions of the people to the temple service. The Jews say these coffer were eleven in number, and that to each chest was affixed a label, designating the object to which the funds there deposited would be appropriated. "Over against" means, *opposite to*; Jesus sat on the other side of the court, where he could distinctly observe all who came to make donations. *Beheld how the people cast money, &c.*] The original is thought to denote that the coin cast into the treasury was *brass* or *copper* money; it is therefore supposed to have been, comparatively, of little value. Dr. A. Clarke suggests that it was "probably that species of small brass coin which was called *prutah* among the Jews, two of which make a farthing." *Many rich cast in much*] The original word, (*polla*,) here rendered "much," is

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

by Dr. Clarke translated *many*; according to which the import of the passage is, that many rich persons cast in many *prutahs*; this yields, we think, a much better sense than the common version suggests; for that seems first to declare that the rich cast in "much"—that is, gave money to a large amount, but yet tacitly condemns them for not being more liberal.

Verse 42. *A poor widow threw in two mites, which make a farthing*] The word rendered "farthing," in this place, is different from that so rendered in Matt. x. 29, and Luke xii. 6. That is *assarion*, or the Roman *as*; the present is *kodrantes*, the Latin *quadrans*, so called from being the fourth part of the preceding: consequently the "farthing" of the present text is but of one-fourth the value of the "farthing" above referred to. The value of the *as* was estimated with reference to the *denarius*, and that of the *quadrans* with reference to the *as*; the denarius containing ten asses, and the *as* four quadrantes. Thus, as the denarius was equal to about fifteen cents of our currency, the *as* (or "farthing" of Matt. x. and Luke xii.) was consequently equivalent to about a cent and a half; and the quadrans, (or "farthing" of the present text,) being one-fourth thereof, would be rather less than three-eighths of a cent. It is worthy of remark, that, according to the statement of Jewish writers, these two *prutah* formed the smallest offering which could be received into the treasury; probably as being the smallest Jewish coin. We may learn from the example of this "poor widow," and our Saviour's implied commendation of her act, that poverty

43 And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury :

44 For all *they* did cast in of their abundance ; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

ought to be no bar to our doing something for the promotion of God's cause.

Verses 43, 44. *He called his disciples*] Being desirous of commending unto them this bright instance of religious benevolence : and of teaching them the true estimate of liberality. *This poor widow hath cast more in than all they, &c.*] More than any of them :—not, to be sure, “more” in pecuniary value, nor, indeed, so much, but more *in proportion to her ability*. From this it is clear that God judges of the benevolent acts of his servants, not so much by their actual amount, as by the proportion that amount bears to their ability. This declaration of Christ is in strict accordance with that of Paul, 2 Cor. viii. 12. The measure of men's benevolence should ever be regulated by their means. If they have but little, let them bestow cheerfully of that little ; if possessed of abundance, let them bear in mind that they are enjoined to give “as God has prospered them.” Let the pupils in our Sunday schools, as well as the adult part of the population, imitate the example of this good woman, and devote the savings of their self-denial and economy to promoting the cause of God, and their offering shall be approved, as was hers. *They cast in of their abundance*] Offered but a part, probably a small part, of their superfluous wealth : gave what they could well spare. *But she of her want*] Of her penury or

poverty. (Luke xxi. 4.) *Cast in all that she had*] Not what she could *well spare*; for she seems to have needed even the pittance she so nobly devoted to the cause of piety: she gave *all her living*—all she had to subsist on for the day, trusting in God for the supply of her necessities. This act of devotion shows both her love and faith; her *love*, in that she cared for the services of God's house, and cheerfully denied herself some comforts, for the greater luxury of contributing toward the advancement of his cause; and her *faith*, in that she unhesitatingly gave her all, trusting in the divine providence for the supply of her necessities.

In conclusion we would remark, in the language of the editor of the "Cottage Bible," that funds for the support of religion "are commonly reckoned among our charities; but with the greatest impropriety, if by that term we understand any thing which we may either do or let alone at pleasure, which seems to be the common notion of a charity. The support of divine worship, and the spread of divine truth, yea, and the relief of the distressed poor, are duties as forcibly enjoined on us as sobriety, chastity, or honesty; only God has left it to our honour and gratitude to apportion the measure to our means." But in giving, let us ever remember, that as "Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money" therein, so, being still omniscient, he beholds both our gifts and our motives. Let us, then, give without ostentation, give freely, give liberally, give from love to God, and we shall not lose our reward.

LESSON VIII.

[A. D. 29.]

On passing out of the temple, Jesus has his attention directed to its strength and magnificence, upon which he predicts its entire destruction, and the evils which should come on Jerusalem.—Matt. xxiv. 1-14; Mark xiii. 1-13; Luke xxi. 5-19.

MATT. xxiv. 1-14.

AND Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him, for to show him the buildings of the temple.

NOTES ON MATT. xxiv. 1-14.

Verse 1. *Jesus departed from the temple*] This was probably toward the evening of Wednesday, the second day before the crucifixion. It would seem, from the gospel history, that our Lord never again entered the precincts of this sacred place. *His disciples came to him*] Mark says, (xiii. 1,) that "one of his disciples came." This was "as Jesus went out of the temple." (Mark.) *To show him the buildings of the temple*] To call his attention to the strength, magnitude, and splendour of the holy house, and of its walls, courts, &c. Mark represents this disciple as saying, "Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here!" And Luke describes him as referring to its being "adorned with goodly stones and gifts;" meaning by the latter term, doubtless, the golden ornaments which Herod and others had presented for the purpose of adornment. The magnificence of the temple excited, indeed, the admiration of the Jews, and the astonishment of all beholders. Among other expensive decorations were several golden vines of exquisite workmanship and im-

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

mense size; some of the clusters of which, according to Josephus, (Wars, b. v, ch. v, § 4,) were as tall as a man. The "stones" to which reference is made in Mark and Luke were of immense size. Josephus says, some of them were forty-five cubits in length, five in height, and six in breadth.* (B. v, ch. v, § 6.) It is not improbable that Christ's recent declaration, "Your house is left unto you desolate," &c., (Matt. xxiii. 38, 39,) was the cause of this disciple's calling our Lord's attention to the appearance of the temple. It would seem that he considered it almost impossible that such an edifice should be *utterly* destroyed.

Verse 2. *Jesus said, See ye not these things?*] Mark has it, "Seest thou these great buildings?" *There shall not be left one stone upon another*] A proverbial and hyperbolical expression, denoting entire destruction; but in this instance meeting with a literal fulfilment. If understood strictly of the *naos*, or body of the temple, (as it, in all probability, should be,) it was *exactly* accomplished; for about forty years after this time, when the Romans under Titus took Jerusalem, this hallowed fane

* Though this statement of the Jewish historian is generally allowed to be exaggerated, it is certain that stones of an immense size were used in the construction of the temple and its appendages. Professor Robinson, in his Biblical Researches in Palestine, states, that when at Jerusalem he measured several of the foundation stones of the exterior wall, (evidently of very ancient date, probably having belonged to Solomon's temple,) varying from twenty to twenty-five feet in length, (one was nearly thirty feet long,) from five to six and a half feet in breadth, and from three to four feet in height.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall

was utterly demolished, and its foundation subsequently torn up with a ploughshare; by which act was fulfilled, not only the prediction of Christ, but also that older prophecy recorded Mic. iii. 12, "Zion shall be ploughed as a field." In this incident the overruling hand of God may be plainly seen; for Titus was desirous of preserving the temple, and gave orders to that effect;

"But Cesar could not save what God had doomed;"

and this noble edifice was destroyed by fire, through a Roman soldier having thrown a lighted firebrand in at one of the windows: nor could the entreaties or commands of Titus rouse his troops to make any exertions for the extinction of the flames. "The temple," says Mr. Watson, "was to be destroyed, in order to effect a complete dispersion of the Jews; for from that time they had no common bond of union. Its demolition is also a standing proof that the Messiah, who was by his presence to make the second house more glorious than the first, (although it wanted the shechinah and the urim and thummim,) has already come. It produced, finally, the total subversion of the Jewish church; for as such it could not exist, its place of sacrifice being razed to the ground, and its priesthood abolished; and thus was terminated, not *mystically*, but in *reality*, the Levitical dispensation, the rites of which could only be performed in the temple at Jerusalem."

Verse 3. *As he sat on the mount of Olives*] Whither he had repaired on leaving the sanctuary. This mountain is on the east of Jerusalem, from which it is separated by the valley of the Kedron. It commands a fine view

these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

of the city, and was, therefore, a very appropriate spot for the delivery of the minute prophecies relating to its destruction which follow. *The disciples came unto him privately*] Not, apparently, all the "disciples" or apostles, but, as we learn from Mark xiii. 3, "Peter, James, John, and Andrew." It may be that these four made the request for further information respecting the deeply interesting subject above noticed, and that afterward the others joined themselves to the inquirers. *When shall these things be?*] Meaning, when shall this threatened destruction take place? *What shall be the sign of thy coming?*] "Sign," here, means *prognostic*, or *token*. They supposed that some wonderful event would take place before he "came," and they wished to know what that would be, that when they should see the "sign" they might know his "coming" was at hand. It is not unlikely that they expected it would be soon. It will be remembered that, a short time before leaving the temple, Jesus had told the Jews there assembled, that after a while they should see him no more until the period arrived when they would hail him with transport as "coming in the name of the Lord." That "coming" we understand to denote their reception of him, spiritually, as their Saviour; the *disciples* probably understood it of his coming to subjugate or destroy the enemies of their country, and to establish a glorious temporal dominion. *And of the end of the world*] By "end of the world," here, we do not suppose the apostles meant the end of time, but the termination, to a great extent, of existing governments, institutions, and usages, and the

introduction of that (to them) glorious state of things which they expected to accompany the advent of the Messiah. The question seems, therefore, to be of nearly the same import with the preceding. This view is strengthened by comparison with the parallel passages; for Mark has it, "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" (Mark xiii. 4:) and Luke's record is, "When shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?" (Luke xxi. 7.) According to Jewish notions, this glorious *terrestrial* reign, after a very long duration, was to issue in the everlasting celestial reign, when the righteous would enjoy consummate bliss. In replying to their inquiries, however, Jesus did not regard their errors, except in an incidental way, removing them by giving correct information about the final judgment and the end of the world. The discourse of our Saviour, occasioned by these inquiries, occupies the remainder of the twenty-fourth chapter, and the whole of the twenty-fifth.

There is much difficulty, says Professor Ripley, from whose excellent work this note is chiefly drawn, in framing a correct interpretation of these two chapters; and accordingly, in regard to different portions, there is much diversity of opinion on the question whether they relate to Christ's coming for the destruction of Jerusalem, or to his coming for the final destruction of the world. This diversity of opinion is occasioned by the nature of the language, which is highly figurative and poetic: and by the absence of those definite marks of transition which greatly aid in understanding a discourse, and which the disciples, perhaps, perceived. In these circumstances it becomes a person to proceed with no little

diffidence in expressing his views of this important discourse. The following appears to me to be a correct analysis of its contents:—

In verses 4-28, Jesus informs the disciples that the destruction of which he speaks is not to take place immediately, but that various events are to occur which ought to be regarded as premonitory of that great catastrophe. In view of these events he gives various cautions for regulating the conduct of his followers; cautions which were necessary, because, notwithstanding these preliminary events, which could not but seem portentous of ruin, the desolation of the city and temple would at last come suddenly on the mass of the people. Having thus shown what would precede the destruction of the city, and of course what should be regarded as signs of that event, he proceeds, in verses 29-31, to describe, in the style of the ancient Hebrew prophets, the downfall of the city and nation, and to give assurance that his followers should be rescued from destruction. In the thirty-second verse he commences an exhortation, enjoining on his disciples to notice the monitory events, and to take seasonable warning. This extends to the forty-fourth verse. After giving these injunctions as to watchfulness, in view of the destruction of the city, he passes on, insensibly, as it were, to the duty of watchfulness in general, in respect to *another* coming of the Son of man, in which *all* would be concerned—namely, his coming at the end of the world. This exhortation extends to the thirtieth verse of the twenty-fifth chapter. The residue of that chapter contains a description of the general judgment, and the entering of all men on the general retributions, for bliss or for wo, of the future world.

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

Verses 4, 5. *Jesus answered*] Replied to the inquiries of the disciples. *Take heed that no man deceive you*] Bloomfield terms this "a form of earnest caution." The admonition was designed to put them on their guard against false pretenders to the Messiahship, as is plain from the succeeding verse. *Many shall come in my name, &c.*] Meaning, many *would* so come. Christ foresaw that this would be the case, but did not *cause* it. To "come in the name" of any person, often imports the being sent by him—being clothed with his authority: (so John v. 43; x. 25 :) but the expression here denotes the assuming to *be the person* whose name is used:—they would come, claiming to be "the Christ." It is probably to these false Christs that Josephus refers when he speaks of the numerous "impostors" and "prophets" who arose before the destruction of Jerusalem, professing to be sent of God for the deliverance of the nation. He does not, indeed, expressly say that they took the name of the Messiah; but he says that which is equivalent, for he asserts that they promised the people freedom from the Roman yoke, (which thing they expected of the Christ, see Luke xxiv. 21,) and that they assumed to work miracles in attestation of the truth of their pretensions. Among these "prophets" he mentions one Theudas, who, during the administration of Fadus, (about twelve years after the crucifixion of our Lord,) "persuaded a great part of the people to take their effects with them, and to follow him to the river Jordan: and that he would, by his own command, divide the river,

6 And ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

(as Joshua did of old,) and afford them an easy passage over it." As, however, Gamaliel, in his argument against the persecution of the apostles, recorded Acts v. 34-39, mentions an impostor named Theudas, and places his revolt prior to that of Judas the Gaulonite, which took place in the infancy of Christ, we are of opinion that Josephus has committed an error in the name, and that the revolt he alludes to was not headed by Theudas, but by some other person. This is, we think, more likely than that there were two persons of this name making pretensions to the Messiahship, which must have been if Josephus has not committed an error. *And shall* (will) *deceive many*] Such, according to the historian just quoted, was the case; he says, "they deluded many." He expressly states (*Wars*, b. ii, c. 13, § 4, 5) that one of these pretenders collected a host of thirty thousand men, and, under pretence of delivering Jerusalem into their hands, (the walls of which would, he said, fall down on their approach,) led them to the mount of Olives, where they were almost entirely cut off by Felix, the Roman governor.

Verse 6. *Ye shall hear of wars, &c.*] For some years before the destruction of Jerusalem, the land of Palestine and the surrounding regions were in great commotion. The oppressive acts of the governors goaded the Jews almost to madness. Among other exciting causes, the emperor [Caligula] ordered his statue to be erected in the temple, and incense offered to it as a god: and on the opposition of the Jews, threatened them with destruction: it was with great difficulty that he was in-

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

duced to rescind the resolution. Certain privileges were also granted by the government to the heathen inhabitants of some of the principal cities in Palestine, Cesarea especially, which were not conceded to the Jews; this caused an insurrection, that was quelled only by force of arms. About the same period, too, violent agitations prevailed on account of the frequent usurpations of the imperial power. "In the space of eighteen months," remarks Gibbon, "four princes [emperors] perished by the sword; and the Roman world was shaken by the fury of the contending armies." *See that ye be not troubled*] "Be not terrified," says Luke, (xxi. 9); "for these things must first come to pass;" "must needs be," says Mark, (ch. xiii. 7.) As though Jesus had said, Be not filled with anxiety at these events; but regard them as under my control, and calmly wait the further developments of my will. "To be without trouble in troublous times is the exclusive privilege of the true Christian." *But the end*] The destruction of the city and temple. *Is not yet*] These events were to be precursors, though not the *immediate forerunners*, of this great calamity. They were but as the faint, distant muttering of the future storm. The disciples were not, therefore, to be alarmed at these tidings; their safety would be provided for, and other "signs" given, to teach them when to flee.

Verse 7. *Nation shall rise against nation, &c.*] Meaning, that one nation should rise against another in war. This is referred, by Grotius, Wetstein, and others, to those various wars and civil commotions with which

most parts of the civilized world were about this time convulsed: and in which Palestine and the neighbouring countries largely shared. Josephus says that "the disorders in all Syria were terrible; and every city was divided into two armies encamped one against another, and the preservation of one party was in the destruction of the other." In these bloody conflicts between the Syrians and Jews immense numbers were slain. At Scythopolis upward of thirteen thousand Jews were treacherously murdered; and at Askelon and Ptolemais four thousand five hundred fell before their enemies; while at Alexandria, in a contest between the Greeks and Jews, (*Wars*, b. ii, c. 18, § 2, 3, 5, 8,) not less than fifty thousand of the latter are stated to have been slain. *There shall be famines*] A "famine" is a scarcity of the means of subsistence. Agabus foretold a famine (*Acts* xi. 28) which came to pass in the days of the emperor Claudius, and which was so severely felt at Jerusalem that, according to Josephus, (*Ant.*, b. xx, c. 2, § 5,) many died for lack of food. Four times, it is said, during his reign, (from A. D. 41-54,) did famine prevail;—namely, twice in Italy, once in Greece, and once in Palestine. *And pestilences*] Prevalent diseases: arising, probably, from want. Scarcity and badness of provisions generally produce epidemic disorders. *And earthquakes*] "Earthquakes" are tremors or shakings of the earth; and sometimes are so violent as to throw down the strongest houses. "They were regarded by the ancients," says Bloomfield, "as portents, presaging public calamity and distress." Grotius has produced accounts of many earthquakes which occurred during this period in Asia, and the islands of the *Ægean* sea; and Josephus mentions their occurrence in Judea.—(*Wars*, b. iv, c. 4,

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and

§ 5.) Tacitus, a Roman historian, mentions one in the reign of Claudius at Rome; and says that in the reign of Nero the cities of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse were overthrown; and the celebrated Pompeii was overwhelmed, and almost destroyed, by an earthquake. In almost all these places Jews were found in great numbers; so, likewise, were there many Christians, who would be warned by them of the near approach of the fulfilment of these words of Christ. To the above catalogue of "signs" given by Matthew, Luke adds, (xxi. 11,) "and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven:" of several of which portents Josephus has left a record, as a flaming sword in the air, a blazing star, a supernatural and very bright light which shone about the temple and the altar, chariots and armies fighting in the clouds, &c. &c.—(*Wars*, book vi, c. 5, § 3.) "These things," says the Jewish historian, speaking of a violent storm, the earthquake, &c., "were a manifest indication that some destruction was coming upon men, when the system of the world was put into this disorder; and any one would guess that these wonders foreshowed some grand calamities that were coming."

Verse 8. *These are the beginning of sorrows*] Meaning, that all these calamities, however grievous, would be followed by still greater ones. They were but as the *prelude* of "sorrows"—and not worthy to be accounted as afflictions in comparison with the greater mental anguish and bodily sufferings which would follow in their train.

Verse 9. *Then shall they deliver you up*] Mark and

shall kill you : and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

Luke add, "to councils" and "synagogues:"—meaning thereby, to the great council or *sanhedrim*, and to the rulers of the synagogues. The word "then," according to Holden, "must be taken in a lax sense for *in those times*:" for the events here foretold happened, chiefly, *before* the above-mentioned calamities, and partly at the same time with them. So Luke says, (xxi. 12,) "But *before* all these, they shall lay their hands on you," &c. According to Mark, our Lord introduced this part of his subject by a special admonition to his disciples; "Take heed," said he, "to yourselves." The design of this caution was, probably, to prevent discouragement and disaffection on the part of the disciples when persecution arose:—the fact of their sufferings being foreseen and revealed to them, together with the promises of divine assistance and comfort, would go far to strengthen and cheer them under their trials, and to prevent apostasy : though they would not avail in all cases. The word "they" denotes their adversaries of every sort:—Jewish and heathen. *To be afflicted*] Rather, *to affliction*. The original is very expressive, and denotes the *pressure of evil* which would come on them. Some of the *forms* of this affliction are enumerated by Mark and Luke; (Mark xiii. 9; Luke xxi. 12;) and the prediction met with ample fulfilment. They were "persecuted;" (1 Thess. ii. 14, 15; Acts xxvi. 11;) they were "brought before councils and synagogues; (Acts iv. 5-7; v. 27, 33; xxii. 19;) before "rulers and kings," as Paul before Gallio, Felix, and Festus; (Acts xviii. 12; xxiv. 24; xxv. 6;) and before Agrippa and Nero. (Acts xxv. 26.)

In this way they testified to the truth before all ranks of their opponents.

Having thus specified the nature and extent of their sufferings for his cause, Jesus, according to Mark and Luke, (Mark xiii. 10, 11; Luke xxi. 14,) directed that when summoned before courts to give an account of their religion, they should not premeditate how or what they should say, but depend on the assistance of God's Holy Spirit; promising to give them wisdom which their adversaries should not be able to "gainsay or resist:"—"meaning," says Bloomfield, "that they should not be able to make any suitable reply, that should carry with it any semblance of truth." *Shall kill you*] Stephen was stoned in a popular tumult, and James the brother of John was put to death by order of Herod Agrippa. Acts vii. 59, 60; xii. 1, 2. In addition to the sacred record, we learn from authentic history that there were severe persecutions against the Christians before the destruction of Jerusalem, and that in one of these the distinguished apostles Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom at Rome. *Ye shall be hated of all nations*] Meaning, they would be very generally hated; or, that in all nations many would hate them. The ground of this "hatred" among the Gentiles is well suggested by Warburton and others to have been caused by the war of opinion which Christianity constantly waged against idolatry, and by the spirituality of its worship. The different pagan religions sociably agreed with each other, but the doctrines of Christ coalesced with none of them. The votary of idol worship readily conceded to his equally deluded neighbour the worthless liberty which was enjoyed by himself; but the worshipper of the one true God could not fail to denounce the belief of the polytheist as "a refuge

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

of lies," and earnestly to plead for its renunciation as a matter of absolute necessity, and urge its deluded subject, under the most tremendous penalties, to embrace the Christian religion. The "hatred" of the Christians by the Jews was probably occasioned, 1st., by the confident assertion of the apostles that Jesus was the Christ; 2d., by their extending the blessings of salvation to the Gentiles. *For my name's sake*] That is, for being my followers:— including, also, the idea of not only being *holders*, but also *propagators*, of his doctrines. The event fully verified the truth of this prediction: for it was soon adjudged a crime to be a Christian. Multitudes were for this cause alone put to death. Tertullian characterizes the persecutions which arose as "a war against the very name" of Christ.

Verse 10. *Then*] In those seasons of persecution and suffering. *Shall many be offended*] "Offended," here, means that they would be stumbled, or caused to fall, by these trials, and so become *apostates*. They would abjure their religion. The divine record furnishes some instances of this character, as Phygellus, Hermogenes, Demas, and Alexander. 2 Tim. i. 15; iv. 10, 14, 15. *Betray one another*] This does not mean that these apostates would "betray one another," but that they would betray those with whom they had formerly been associated, and who still adhered to Christ. Mark tells us (xiii. 12) that the brother would betray the brother, and the father the son—the most endearing associations of life would be violated by the rage of persecution. This, in the persecutions of Christians, has been often done; and nothing shows more fully the deep and deadly

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

opposition of the human heart to the gospel. *Shall hate one another*] This is probably spoken of that "hatred" which would be borne by the apostates to their former companions, even when they did not betray them.

Verses 11, 12. *False prophets shall rise*] By "false prophets," here, it is commonly supposed that we are to understand those teachers of erroneous doctrines against whom Paul, Peter, and John wrote. These early endeavoured to corrupt Christianity by bringing in dangerous heresies. They "deceived many." *And because iniquity shall abound*] By the word rendered "iniquity," here, some understand the persecutions and sufferings to which the Christians were to become subject; but others think it better to interpret the word of that *licentiousness* which formed so striking a characteristic of those times, and from which even the church of God was not entirely free. *The love of many*] Meaning, their love to God and his cause. *Shall wax cold*] That is, shall become cold, or *extinguished*. That by *waxing* or growing cold, here, "we are not to understand a *lukewarm* state, but an *entirely lapsed* condition, appears," says Mr. Watson, "from our Lord promising salvation in the next verse only to those who should 'endure to the end;' which sufficiently indicates that those whose love had grown cold had fallen into a state by which salvation was forfeited." "But," it may be asked, "how would the 'abounding of iniquity' effect this?" Probably, by blunting the moral sense, and so leading the subject of the grace of God into habits irreconcilable with the

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached

enjoyment of the love of God : for if by little and little—by unwatchfulness and compliances with the evil examples of others in smaller things—the vigour of that affection is suffered to decay, then the more powerful temptations prevail, and the divine principle of love—the strongest barrier to sin—becomes extinct.

Verse 13. *He that shall endure*] That is, that shall steadfastly maintain his attachment to Christ, and obedience to his precepts, notwithstanding these persecutions and apostasies. *To the end*] Not to the end of the persecution, or to the fall of Jerusalem, but *to the end of life*. *Shall be saved*] Shall be admitted to eternal salvation. Many commentators, to be sure, understand by “the end,” here, the destruction of Jerusalem; and the promise of *salvation* to them that “endure to the end” they interpret of deliverance from the ruin which would overwhelm the inhabitants of that devoted city: but this exposition seems strained; and we think it is better to understand the “end” of the close of life, and the promise, of final salvation in heaven. Luke xxi. 18 represents our Lord as saying, “there shall not a hair of your head perish;” a proverbial saying, importing the certainty and completeness of their final salvation. To this he adds an exhortation to patience under their sufferings, based, apparently, on this certainty of future deliverance and happiness—“In your patience possess ye your souls.”

Verse 14. *This gospel of the kingdom*] Meaning, the system of divine truth embodied in the gospel, which is here called “gospel of the kingdom,” because it treats

in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

of the nature of Christ's spiritual dominion among men. *Shall be preached in all the world*] The word "world," here, is by some supposed to denote merely the Roman empire; which, indeed, at that time embraced nearly the whole known world. Others think it better to take the term "world" in its ordinary sense, and to understand our Lord as saying, that before the accomplishment of the threatening against the holy city, the gospel should be *generally* (not universally) diffused throughout the earth. "Previously to the destruction of Jerusalem, the gospel was not only preached in the Lesser Asia, and Greece, and Italy, the greatest theatres of action then in the world; but was likewise propagated as far *north* as Scythia; as far *south* as Ethiopia; as far *east* as Parthia and India; and as far *west* as Spain and Britain. St. Paul himself speaks (Col. i. 6, 23) of the gospel's being come into *all the world*—meaning, all the then known world—and preached *to every creature*:—[language which nothing less than a *very general* dissemination of it could at all justify.] What but the wisdom of God could foretell this? and what but the power of God could accomplish it?"—*Clarke. For a witness, &c.*] Meaning, perhaps, for a "witness unto all nations" of the forbearance and long-suffering of God toward the Jewish nation, and of the justice of the punishment which was about to fall on that devoted people. *Then shall the end come*] That is, that the destruction of Jerusalem would speedily follow the general promulgation of the gospel: which would be a "sign" of easy interpretation to the Christians of Judea. Some commentators are of

LESSON IX.

[A. D. 29.]

Christ's prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, continued.—Matthew xxiv. 15-35; Mark xiii. 14-31; Luke xxi. 20-33.

MATT. xxiv. 15-35.

WHEN ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand,)

opinion that this prediction does not refer exclusively to the subversion of the Jewish nation, but includes, also, a declaration, that before "the end" of this world shall come, the gospel shall be universally diffused. *It may be* that this is a correct view, but we prefer to confine its application to the early spread of the gospel, and the destruction of Jerusalem.

NOTES ON MATT. xxiv. 15-35.

Verse 15. In this and the following verses Jesus instructs his followers when and how they should provide for their safety, lest, being enclosed by the invading army, they should perish in the overthrow of the metropolis. *When ye shall see the abomination of desolation*] Rather, "the abomination that maketh desolate;" (Dan. xii. 11;) meaning, the Roman army, as is clear from Luke xxi. 20, which see. This host is probably called an "abomination," chiefly because of its idolatrous standards, to which divine honours were paid by the soldiers. See below. *Spoken of by Daniel*] The destruction of Jerusalem is thus clearly predicted in the writings of that prophet:—"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself;

and the people of the prince that shall come *shall destroy the city and the sanctuary*; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war *desolations* are determined." Dan. ix. 26, 27. That by "the people of the prince" who would accomplish this destruction the Romans are meant, our Lord here assures us, by the interpretation which he gives the prophecy. *In the holy place*] That is, in and around Jerusalem. That the temple itself is not intended is certain, from the fact that, when it fell into the possession of the Romans, escape was no longer possible. Jerusalem and the immediate neighbourhood were accounted "holy," in consequence of the vicinity of the temple. Mark clothes this injunction of our Lord in language different from Matthew:—"When ye shall see," says he, "the abomination of desolation *standing where it ought not*;" the *sense*, however, is the same in both passages, as will appear from what follows. Josephus tells us, (*Antiq.*, b. xviii, c. iii, § 1,) that on one occasion Pilate removed the Roman army from Cesarea to Jerusalem, designing it to take up its winter quarters in that city; and that the troops brought with them their ensigns, to some of which were affixed Cesar's effigy: "whereas," says he, "our law forbids the very making of images; on which account the former procurators were wont to make their entrance into the city with such ensigns as had not those ornaments." The people, therefore, earnestly entreated that those "images" should be removed from the holy city, and finally prevailed on Pilate to send them back to Cesarea, though the troops continued at Jerusalem. *Whoso readeth, &c.*] These words are thought by many to have been spoken by Christ with the design of directing the attention of his hearers to the prophecy; but the

16 Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains :

best recent commentators consider them (as also those of Mark xiii. 14) as a parenthetical admonition of the evangelist, suggested, probably, by the opening words of Dan. ix. 25.

Verse 16. *Then*] When the Roman army should encamp against Jerusalem. *Let them which be in Judea*] Meaning, in the country parts of Judea, as opposed to the city of Jerusalem. *Flee into the mountains*] By "mountains," here, some understand the mountainous regions in the north-east of Palestine, which, being under the government of the younger Agrippa, took no part in the revolt, in consequence of which all who fled thither for protection remained safe. Whether this be the import of our Saviour's injunction, or whether he simply meant that those in the open country should flee to the mountains generally, to secrete themselves in the caverns with which they abounded, and so escape the severer calamities of the war, we know not; though we deem the former the more likely opinion. Luke (xxi. 21) represents our Lord as adding, "let them which are in the midst of it"—meaning, probably, in Jerusalem—"depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto." By giving heed to these injunctions, the Christians of Jerusalem, and probably a number of the other inhabitants, saved their lives; for after Cestius Gallus, prefect of Syria, had encamped before Jerusalem, and taken and destroyed a part of the city, he unexpectedly, and without any apparent reason, raised the siege, and retreated to Antipatris. Immediately on this the Christians fled from the devoted city, and found an asylum on the east side of the Jordan. It is supposed

17 Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house :

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days !

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day :

that not a single follower of Christ suffered in the destruction of Jerusalem. To the above Luke further adds, (verse 22,) "For these be the days of vengeance," or punishment, "that all things which are written may be fulfilled;" meaning, when all the unaccomplished predictions against Jerusalem shall have their fulfilment.

Verses 17, 18. *Let him which is on the house-top*] The roofs of the houses in Palestine were, and still are, usually flat, with an inner and outer flight of steps, and were frequently resorted to for exercise, air, and meditation. *Not come down to take any thing out of his house*] This injunction, as well as that in the following verse, denotes that the flight should be speedy and unencumbered. On seeing the Romans depart from before their walls, they were not to consume time in gathering together their furniture, clothing, or provision, for by so doing they would endanger their lives, but immediately take to rapid flight. *Return to take his clothes*] Meaning, probably, the long outer garment usually worn when abroad, and which was generally laid aside while labouring.

Verse 20. *Pray that your flight be not in the winter*] Because of the difficulty of travelling, the inclemency of the weather, and perhaps the lack of food in the fields. By "winter," here, is meant the rainy season, which

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not

commences with occasional and moderate showers about the first of November, and continues until near the close of March: though the rains are heaviest during the months of November and December. "During the winter," says Professor Robinson, "the roads, or rather tracks, in Palestine, are muddy, deep, and slippery; so that the traveller at this season is subjected to the utmost discomfort and inconvenience. When the rains cease, the mud soon disappears, and the roads become hard, though never smooth. Snow often falls in Jerusalem in January and February to the depth of a foot, or more; but does not usually lie long. The ground never freezes." —*Bib. Researches*, vol. ii, pp. 97, 98. *Neither on the sabbath*] Perhaps meaning, neither on the Jewish nor Christian sabbath; for on the Jewish sabbath they might not be permitted to travel unmolested, and on the Christian, many of them might hesitate, on account of the rigid views of the sacredness of the sabbath in which they had been educated, and which they now transferred, possibly, to the Christian rest day. For these reasons Christ directs his disciples to pray that God would so order matters that the time of their escape should not fall either in the winter or on the sabbath. "And were the march of Roman armies," asks Mr. Watson, "and the decisions of Roman councils, to be interfered with in answer to the prayers of a few poor Christians? Let philosophy scoff, but let faith adore. So it was." Josephus says that Gallus raised the siege early in Marchesvan, or October, and consequently before the "winter" had set in.

Verse 21. *Then shall be great tribulation*] "Tribu-

since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

lation" means *affliction* or *suffering*. *Such as was not —nor ever shall be*] "The best commentators agree," says Bloomfield, "in considering this as a somewhat hyperbolic mode of expressing what is *exceedingly great*. Yet such were the atrocities and horrors of the siege of Jerusalem, (never to this day paralleled,) that the words may admit of the most literal acceptance." Luke has specified (xxi. 23, 24) some of the particulars of this tribulation:—"There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people; they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." We will notice this declaration more fully:—*There shall be great distress in the land*] The amount of this "distress" may be imagined from the statement of Lipsius, gathered from Josephus, that in the country towns and villages not less than two hundred and forty-seven thousand persons perished. But this was not all. When Titus advanced against Jerusalem, multitudes of Jews were collected in the city from all quarters, to celebrate the feast of the Passover. This circumstance greatly enhanced the calamities of the siege, as such vast numbers soon consumed the provisions which the different factions had not destroyed;* and the miseries

* Josephus tells us (*Wars*, b. v, c. 1, § 4) that a sufficient quantity of corn and other provisions had been laid up for a siege of many years, but that it was wantonly destroyed in the party feuds which prevailed among the Jewish leaders; "as if," says he, "they had done it on purpose to serve the Romans, by destroying the nerves of their own power."

of famine began to be experienced very soon after the Romans appeared before the city. To these calamities were soon added those of a grievous pestilence. *They shall fall by the sword*] That is, shall be slain in war. The number that fell in battle is not known, but it must have been immense; Josephus states that eleven hundred thousand perished at Jerusalem alone:—this, however, includes those who died of famine and pestilence, as well as those who fell in battle. If to this number be added the two hundred and forty-seven thousand who met their end in the various towns and villages, we have the sum of one million three hundred and forty-seven thousand: and this independent of the unascertained, but large number who perished in caves and woods, and in the vaults and sewers of Jerusalem, and elsewhere. *Led away captive*] Josephus informs us that the number of Jewish captives taken in the whole war amounted to ninety-seven thousand. Seven hundred of the handsomest of these were sent to Rome to adorn the triumphal procession of Titus; many were distributed to the provinces, where they were obliged to fight with wild beasts, or with each other, in the different theatres; multitudes were sent bound to Egypt, to work in the mines; an immense number were sold for slaves, at a very low price, because of the abundance of captives; and a great number, chiefly of the lower orders, were liberated, because no one would take them at any price. Thus was fulfilled both the prediction of our Saviour, and the prophecy which Moses had uttered sixteen hundred years before, “Ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bond-women, *and no man shall buy you.*” Deut. xxviii. 68. (Josephus, *Wars*, b. vi, c. 8, § 2, and c. 9, § 2, 3; b. vii, c. 5, § 3.) Indeed, it is impossible

to trace throughout the minute fulfilment of ancient and more recent prophecy, in the awful transactions and crimes of this season, and yet resist the conviction that in all these things there was the hand of God punishing a most guilty people, and requiring from them "all the righteous blood which had been shed from the foundation of the world, and especially that most righteous blood of Christ, the guilt of which they had invoked on their own heads when they cried, "His blood be on us, and on our children!" From them, and from their children, that blood was most fearfully required!—*Pict. Bible*. "Was not this a time of great tribulation? Were not these days of vengeance indeed? Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles] That is, shall be subject to them. The expression also implies that the subjection should be an *oppressive* one. The idea is taken from the custom which anciently prevailed among conquerors, of placing the foot on the neck of subjugated enemies. The city continued in the hands of the Romans until wrested from them by the Persians, A. D. 614; but it was regained by them in 628. In 637 it was surrendered to the Saracens, who kept it until 1098, when the Crusaders won it. In 1187 the Saracens again obtained its possession; and in 1517 Jerusalem, with the rest of Syria and Egypt, passed under the sway of the Ottoman power, under whose dominion it still continues. Thus, though it has frequently changed masters, it has never reverted to its former owners—so literally has this prophecy been hitherto accomplished. *Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled]* This part of the prediction seems to intimate that Jerusalem—the city once declared to be "the joy of the whole earth"—shall *not* be "trodden down" for ever; but only until "those Gentiles have

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

done all which God has decreed they should do." But when shall this be? We know not. The nations are still "treading down" Jerusalem, and the end of their oppression is known only to the Lord.—*Clarke*.

Verse 22. *Except those days should be shortened*] Meaning, except the time of those calamities (war famine, pestilence) should be abridged, so as to bring them to a close sooner than they would be naturally brought. *There should no flesh be saved*] That is, none of the Jews exposed to their ravages should escape death; they would all perish. Those persons who had followed Christ's injunction, and fled to Pella, or elsewhere, are not, of course, included, for they were already in safety. *But for the elect's sake*] By "the elect," here, the Jewish Christians are probably meant: who are so termed because they were God's *chosen* people, having become such by believing on Christ. (The word "elect" simply means *chosen*, or *to choose*, according as it is a noun or verb.) It is probable that, in addition to those followers of Christ who so providentially escaped from Jerusalem prior to its investment by Titus, and to those who had left the country parts and fled "to the mountains," there were still many lingering in Judea whose circumstances had prevented their adopting the course of their fellow-believers. If so, they would be exposed to many of the horrors of a vindictive war. Besides, those who had fled from their homes, and were dwelling in comparative safety, were in all likelihood suffering much from privations of various kinds, which would necessarily continue until the war should close.

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

For the sake of these—in compassion to their sufferings—the duration of these evils should be abridged. *Those days shall be shortened*] Mark says, (xiii. 20,) by “the Lord.” Not, indeed, miraculously, but by God’s overruling the designs, the prejudices, the passions of men; and so causing them to become the means of bringing about his purposes. Thus the malignant feuds of the contending parties in Jerusalem did more to expedite the downfall of that city than did all the power of the Roman arms. And Titus, when viewing the fortifications, after he had obtained possession of the place, could not help ascribing his success to divine aid:—“We have certainly,” said he, “had God for our assistant in this war, and it was no other than God who ejected the Jews out of these fortifications; for what could the hands of men, or any machines, do toward overthrowing these towers?” —*Wars*, b. vi, c. 9, § 1.

Verses 23–25. *Then if any say, Here is Christ, or there*] We think the *sense* of this passage would be more apparent if translated, “If, then, any man shall say,” &c.; for our Lord’s intention would seem to be, not to point out the time of these “false Christs” and “false prophets,” but to repeat the caution he had already given the disciples (verses 5, 11) to be on their guard against them. The renewal of this warning shows to how great danger the Jewish Christians were exposed through their national prejudices; for all these pretenders addressed themselves to the passions, and, *before* the destruction of Jerusalem, held out the delusive hopes of deliverance, under an assumed divine commission, or, after that event,

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

promised the restoration of the nation. Nothing but the most assured confidence that the Messiah had already come in the person of their beloved Lord could have sustained them under these circumstances. *False Christs*] Persons who pretended to be the Christ. *Shall show great signs and wonders*] Meaning, shall perform, or rather, *pretend* to perform, miracles, in confirmation of their claims to the Messiahship. What these "great signs and wonders" were, we have now no means of judging: though, from the character ascribed to their authors by Josephus, (who calls them "magicians" and "sorcerers,") we may reasonably suppose they consisted in the performance of certain acts of jugglery, artfully contrived to mislead the ignorant. *If it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect*] The words, "If it were possible," do not imply any *impossibility* of deceiving "the elect," or Jewish Christians, but simply *the great difficulty* of so doing. Thus we read of Paul, (Acts xx. 16,) that "he hasted, *if it were possible* for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost." This it was difficult, but clearly not impossible, for him to do; for had it been impossible, he would not have made the effort. The original is the same in both passages. Again, Rom. xii. 18, "*If it be possible*, live peaceably with all men." Now, this might be a confessedly *difficult* work, but if *impossible* to be done, the exhortation would be unnecessary. The import of this declaration, therefore, is, that so specious would be the pretensions of these impostors, as *almost* to impose upon the Jewish Christians.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.

Much of the danger of the latter arose, however, from the prejudices of early education:—they had fondly and confidently clung to the notion of a mighty temporal deliverer; and when they saw their beloved country laid waste by a desolating war, and the revered temple, the habitation of God, likely to fall into the polluting grasp of the heathen, it would not have been *very* astonishing if they had come to the conclusion that, after all, they *might* have been mistaken in Jesus, and thus led to rank themselves among the followers of some “false Christ.” From this delusion the information now given doubtless tended much to preserve them. Those who adduce this text as proof that it is impossible to seduce the “elect” (meaning thereby true Christians) from their allegiance to Christ, seem to forget not only how solemnly our Lord warns them to “take heed,” and to “watch” and “pray,” all which supposes danger, and that of no common kind, but that the passage says nothing as to the possibility or impossibility of final perseverance.

Verse 26. *If they shall say*] If it should be said. *He*] Christ. *Is in the desert*] In the wilderness, or uninhabited parts; perhaps represented to be preparing for the deliverance of the nation. *Go not forth*] Do not go and join yourselves to the impostor. *He is in the secret chambers*] In some secret room, waiting for the proper time to manifest himself. The extreme anxiety which prevailed for the appearance of the Messiah would afford very favourable opportunities for the practising of deceptions of this sort; and we know, from the testimony of Josephus, (*Wars*, b. vi, c. 5, § 2,) that the leaders of the

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

insurrection did not hesitate to suborn persons to make declarations to this effect, "in order to keep the people from deserting, and that they might be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes." *Believe it not*] Do not put any confidence in the reports that Christ is in this or in that place. The *reason* for this injunction is given in the next verse.

Verse 27. *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth unto the west*] That is, as it unexpectedly breaks upon the sight, without any premonition, rapidly flashing from one quarter of the heavens unto the opposite quarter, and that in the most public manner. *So shall the coming of the Son of man be*] So shall be his "coming," in its unexpectedness, publicity, and rapidity of destruction: consequently, the rumours above alluded to ought to excite no apprehension. The "coming" here spoken of has reference to the destruction Christ was about to bring on the Jews, through the instrumentality of the Romans, and not to his final coming to judgment, as is clear from the following verse. We know not that the Saviour had any design in representing the lightning as breaking forth "out of the east," &c., but it is certain that it was from that quarter the Romans invaded Judea, and it is *possible* that he meant this remark to point out that fact.

Verse 28. *For wheresoever the carcass is, &c.*] This is supposed to be a proverbial saying, importing that as surely as birds of prey fly to and devour the carcasses on which they feed, so surely would "the Son of man"

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her

bring the threatened punishment on the rebellious Jews. The language may also be considered as descriptive:—the “carcass” representing the Jewish people, and the “eagles” the Roman army; whose standards were frequently surmounted by a brazen eagle. *The eagles are gathered together*] By “eagles,” here, commentators generally suppose a species of vulture, very common in the East, to be meant: which, however, was popularly ranked with the eagle. See further on Luke xvii. 37, vol. iii, pp. 273, 274.

Verse 29. *Immediately after—those days*] Mark (xiii. 24) says, “In those days, after that tribulation.” The *time* pointed out in both these passages would seem to be a period at no great distance from the destruction of Jerusalem: the words “immediately,” and “in those days,” being often used to express time comparatively near, though perhaps not directly consecutive to the events before spoken of. *Shall the sun be darkened, &c.*] By this highly figurative language we understand our Lord to point out the approaching dissolution of the Jewish nation. The ancient prophets, we find, predicted in similar strains the destruction of the kingdoms against which their prophecies were directed. Thus, when Ezekiel, in the name of the Lord, announced the coming subversion of Egypt, he said, “When I shall put thee out, I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light: all the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee.” Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8. Isaiah foretold the desolation of Babylon in equally nervous and poetic language. Isa. xiii. 10.

light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken :

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man

To the particulars enumerated by Matthew in this verse, Luke adds, (xxi. 25, 26,) "And upon the earth [shall be] distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves thereof roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." By "earth," here, we are probably to understand the land of Palestine merely; the term having, sometimes, this limited signification: and by "*distress of nations*," the deep anxiety which would pervade the minds of its inhabitants, both Jews and Samaritans, at the horrors of their situation. "With perplexity" would, perhaps, be better rendered *amidst*, or *on account of*, perplexity. They would be greatly perplexed to know how to lessen the amount of their sufferings, or how to escape from them. The expression, "the sea and the waves roaring," is not to be interpreted literally, but is to be regarded as a lively figure of the successive troubles which would overwhelm them, and especially, perhaps, of the violent commotions which would precede, accompany, and follow the destruction of the Jewish polity. The words, "men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth,"—that is, on the land of Judea,—denote that, through a fearful expectation of increasing sufferings, the hearts of many of the people would, as it were, die within them.

Verse 30. *Then*] In the accomplishment of these predictions. *Shall appear the sign of the Son of man*] The *proof* (which is here the import of the word "sign") that Jesus is the Messiah, shall "appear," or be made

in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of

manifest. It had been plainly declared, in the prophetic writings, that the glory of the second temple should exceed that of the former, inasmuch as "the Desire of all nations"—the "Lord," even "the messenger of the covenant"—should appear in that place. But when the hallowed fane should be destroyed, and that in accordance with the express declaration of Jesus that this would be the case, they would possess the fullest proof that the Messiah had indeed come, and that the despised Nazarene was he; though they might resist even this evidence, and yield themselves up to infidelity. This answer was probably thus framed as a reply to the question put by the disciples in verse 3. *All the tribes of the earth mourn*] Meaning, probably, the inhabitants of Judea, who would "mourn" because of their severe afflictions. *They shall see, &c.*] This splendid imagery is designed to point out, 1st. The majesty of Christ's coming, and the dignity of Him to whom all power in heaven and earth is given; 2dly. The irresistibleness of his power. "Sudden and irresistible destruction, in which much of the hand of God evidently appears, is often expressed by his coming in the clouds."—*Whitby*.

Verse 31. *He shall send his angels*] The word "angels" denotes *messengers*, of all and every character. So, in Scripture language, inanimate as well as animate objects are sometimes represented as God's "angels," because they are occasionally employed to accomplish his purposes. If the reference be still to the destruction of Jerusalem, these "angels" may be understood of the

a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

various instrumentalities by which Christ, as Head of the church, secured the safety of his chosen people—his followers. *With a great sound of a trumpet*] Assemblies of the people were anciently collected among the Jews by sound of trumpet, as they are generally among us by the ringing of bells: (Num. x. 2, 3:) and it is thought by some that there is here a covert allusion to this usage: not, indeed, that in “gathering together his elect” a trumpet would be actually used; but meaning, that they should be as certainly collected and conveyed to places of safety as they could have been had the most public proclamation for their gathering been made. *From the four winds*] From all quarters. The Jews expressed the cardinal points by the four winds which blow from them. Luke represents our Lord as closing these instructions with this encouraging remark:—“When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” Luke xxi. 28. By the phrase, “When these things *begin* to come,” &c., we understand the Saviour to mean, When ye shall perceive that these predictions are *receiving* their accomplishment. The exhortation to “look up,” and to “lift up their heads,” is an encouragement to cast off all anxiety, and to trust in God, with the assurance that he would save them. The “redemption” spoken of is to be understood of their deliverance from the trials and persecutions brought on them by the Jews, which it is declared would then be near at hand. After the subversion of the Jewish nation, Christians were much less persecuted by the Jews than they had previously been.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

Having thus spoken, Jesus, according to the testimony of the three evangelists who record this discourse in whole or in part, proceeded to answer the inquiry of the disciples (verse 3) as to the *time* of this destruction, which he said would be as plainly indicated by the "signs" above mentioned, as the approach of summer is by the leafing of the fig-tree.

Verses 32-35. *Learn a parable, &c.*] Learn by an illustration (as to the time of his coming) from the fig-tree. *When his branch is yet tender*] Having become soft by the rising of the sap from the roots, and its circulation through all parts of the tree. *Ye know the summer is nigh*] Meaning, the time corresponding to our spring and summer. The Hebrews divided the year into two principal divisions, summer and winter. *When ye shall see these things*] That is, the "signs" which would precede the destruction of Jerusalem. *Know it is near*] The "it" refers to the time of his coming. *Verily*] Truly, certainly. *This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled*] That is, *some* of that "generation" should not "pass" away—not die—till, &c. "Notwithstanding the dissent of some," says Bloomfield, "the phrase can only mean 'this very generation,' 'the race now living.'" John, and probably others who were then disciples, outlived the destruction of Jerusalem; and multitudes of persons who were young when these

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

words were uttered, must have survived their fulfilment. The most natural application of this language is certainly to the overthrow of the Jewish nation; but because it will bear another construction, and is capable of being interpreted in the sense that the "generation" or *race* of Jews should not become extinct until the consummation of all things, and because the language of the greater part of this discourse is highly figurative and majestic, and terms are employed which might well suit a description of the close of the world's history, some commentators give to these predictions a twofold signification:—the first of which they apply to the judgments brought on the Jews, the second to the end of the world and the final judgment. We think, however, with Dr. A. Clarke, that it is better to apply the discourse thus far only to the ruin of the Jewish state. *Heaven and earth shall pass away, &c.*] That is, they shall *sooner* pass away than these words come to naught:—a strong manner of declaring the sure occurrence of the things foretold.

LESSON X.

[A. D. 29.]

Destruction of Jerusalem, continued—The importance of watchfulness in view of that event strongly insisted on.—Matthew xxiv. 36-51; Mark xiii. 32-37; Luke xxi. 34-36.

MATT. xxiv. 36-51.

BUT of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

NOTES ON MATT. xxiv. 36-51.

Verse 36. *But of that day and hour*] Meaning, the *exact time* when the evils threatened against the Jews should be brought upon their city and nation. *Knoweth no man, no, nor the angels*] To this Mark adds, (xiii. 32,) "neither the Son." This passage has been urged as decisive against the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; for if divine, he must be omniscient; "which," say the objectors, "he confesses he is not, by declaring himself ignorant of the exact time when these things would come to pass." To this it is replied, That Christ is not to be understood as declaring himself ignorant, but as simply stating that the exact time of these events should not be *made known* by any man or angel, neither by the Son, but by the Father alone; and the result proved, that even this revelation was to be given only by the fact of its occurrence. This is the solution adopted by many eminent critics, and happily it is not without example in the New Testament. So Paul, when writing to the Corinthians, says, (1 Cor. ii. 2,) "I determined not to *know* any thing among you save Jesus Christ;" meaning, not that he was resolved on being ignorant of all other knowledge, but that he was determined not to teach

37 But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

any other. The word "know," therefore, in these passages, may properly signify to make known. Another solution proposed by some eminent commentators is, that Jesus here speaks as a mere man:—and that it may well be supposed that while, in his divine nature, he knew all things, there were many things of which, as man, he was ignorant, otherwise than as they were made known to him by inspiration. We prefer, however, the former view.

Verses 37–39. *As the days of Noe were, so shall, &c.*] The sense is, "The same shall happen at this coming of Christ as did in the time of Noah," namely, the calamity shall be sudden and unexpected. *For as they were eating and drinking, &c.*] This language is probably designed to show the feeling of security with which the antediluvians pursued their ordinary avocations, or sought their pleasure, even on the verge of destruction. *Knew not until the flood*] "Knew not" must have the sense of *heeded not*; for certainly they had, or might have had, sufficient information on this point; but they were negligent of the warning of Noah: and though he threatened them with the coming destruction for at least a hundred and twenty years, he was to them "as one that mocked."

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 *Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.*

42 Watch, therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

Verses 40, 41. *Two in the field*] Meaning, two men. *Two women at the mill*] The "mill" here spoken of is the hand-mill which was then, and still is, in general use in the East for grinding breadstuffs. The labour of grinding the corn generally devolved on the females. For a description and illustration of the "mill," see on Luke xvii. 35, vol. iii, pp. 271, 272. The scope of these two verses is not clear. Some take them to denote that the destruction will be as general as it will be unexpected; so that no two persons employed together shall escape. Others, with more reason, suppose them to point out those instances of singular and providential deliverances from these calamities which those who believed in Christ would experience. This would appear the more remarkable when they occurred among persons of the same family or household.

Verse 42. *Watch, therefore, &c.*] Be earnestly and constantly looking for, or expecting, the fulfilment of these predictions. To this injunction Mark adds, (xiii. 33,) "and pray." The disciples were to "watch" and "pray" for their Lord's advent, that they might not be surprised or taken unawares, and unprepared. It is not unlikely that one reason why the exact time of his "coming" was not given them was, that they might be the more particular to live in a spirit of vigilance and in the exercise of holy duties. The obvious duty of thus "watching," Jesus illustrates as follows.

43 But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his

Verses 43, 44. *If the good man of the house*] Meaning the householder, the head of the family. *Had known in what watch the thief would come*] At what part of the night. The Jews divided the night into four watches. *He would have watched*] Would not have retired to rest, but have remained up to protect his property. Not knowing the exact time, however, he became unwatchful, and his previous information proved of no service to him, because not suitably improved. So they had been informed that Christ *would come* in the manner and for the purposes above specified; and they are instructed by this illustration to be continually watching, lest, notwithstanding their partial knowledge, the Son of man should "come" and find them unprepared. This is one view of the subject. Another opinion as to the import of these verses is, That as the master of a family who had received information that a thief would come during some part of a particular watch would remain up for his coming during the whole watch, that he might defeat his evil purposes, so they, having received partial information, were to be incited to constant watchfulness. Hence the exhortation, *Be ye also ready*.

Verses 45-51. The instructions here given are designed to exhibit and enforce the advantages of diligence and watchfulness in the proper discharge of duty, and the danger of neglecting or abusing the opportunities

lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46 Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite *his* fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

MARK xiii. 34-37.

34 *For the Son of man is* as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

and trusts which God has committed to us. See further on Luke xii. 42-48, vol. iii, pp. 112-114.

MARK xiii. 34-37.

Verse 34. *The Son of man is like, &c.*] Meaning, that the conduct of the "Son of man," in thus giving his disciples a charge to watchfulness and diligence, "is like," or may be compared to, that of a man who, being about to go from home for a length of time, calls his servants around him, and assigns to them their respective duties. *Gave to every one his work*] This may teach us that Christ has a work for each of his followers to perform, and that if that work be not done, we shall not be held guiltless. *Commanded the porter to watch*] The "porter" denotes the door or gate keeper. His

35 Watch ye therefore ; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning ;

36 Lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

37 And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.

duty would be to "watch," both that he might keep out improper persons, and be ready to admit his lord whensoever he should return home.

Verses 35-37. *Watch ye, &c.*] All the servants being thus appointed to their posts, as in a well-ordered family, they were "to watch"—that is, to be diligently employed in their several callings, assured that their master would return, though at an uncertain period, and call every one of them to an account of his doings, and deal with them accordingly. *Even, midnight, cock-crowing, or morning*] These terms are employed to denote the four watches into which the night was divided. The meaning is, that as the servants knew not at what moment their lord would return, they ought always to have their business in such a state as to be ready, at any time, to account to him. "Sleeping," here, denotes unwatchfulness, negligence. That the parable is of universal application may be inferred from verse 37.

Luke gives another portion of this discourse, (xxi. 34-37,) not furnished by the other evangelists:—"Take heed to yourselves," says he, "lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares ; for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." In these words our Lord gives an earnest caution against indulgence in sensuality, or the pleasures of the table ; such gratifications having a tendency both to unfit for intimate and

lively communion with God, and to create a feeling of indifference to spiritual things incompatible with that watchfulness or diligence in his service so repeatedly and strongly insisted on by Christ. "Overcharged with surfeiting" means, *made heavy* by excessive indulgence; when the *animal* triumphs over the intellectual and spiritual powers of man, and weighs him down. By "cares of this life," is meant anxiety or perplexity about worldly concerns. "And so that day,"—meaning, probably, the day of one's death,—“come upon you unawares:” which it most assuredly would, if these earthly things occupied any prominent part in their afflictions. The expression, “for as a *snare* shall it come,” denotes the suddenness and unexpectedness of the event, as a “snare” is suddenly sprung on its victim. Having thus admonished his followers, the Saviour (according to Luke xxi. 36) addressed to them the following exhortation:—“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” The expressions, “accounted *worthy* to escape,”—“and to stand before the Son of man,” are supposed to mean, that ye may be *honoured* with an escape from, or triumph over, those evils; and finally, with the favour and intimacy of the Messiah in the world of glory.

“We must aim,” says Matthew Henry, “not only to escape the severe judgments of God, but to ‘stand before the Son of man;’ not only to stand *acquitted* before him as our Judge, but to ‘stand before him’—to *attend on* him, as our Master, and serve him day and night in his temple, (Revelation vii, 15,) and so, always behold his face.”

MATT. XXV. 1-13.

1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

MATT. XXV. 1-13.

Verse 1. *Then*] At the coming of Christ to judge the world. *Shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins*] That is, the *proceedings* in the "kingdom of heaven," or the mediatorial kingdom of the Son of God, shall then be manifestly in agreement with, or like unto, the principles which were acted on in the case of ten virgins who attended at a certain marriage. Our Lord's object in narrating this parable is, apparently, to illustrate and enforce the advantage of Christian vigilance, or the faithful practice of piety. The number, "ten," is of no import in the application of the parable, but may have been assumed from its being customary in Judea to have this number of maidens to attend, on such occasions, on the bride: just as Plutarch represents the Romans to be in the habit of having *five* on similar events. *Which (virgins) took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom*] That is, the bridegroom *and the bride*. The whole of this imagery is Oriental, and must therefore be explained by reference to Eastern usages. We learn from the reports of travellers among the Orientals, that marriages are in the East usually celebrated with great pomp: and that it is customary for the newly-married husband to convey his wife to her future residence in the evening, attended by a concourse of friends. In the meanwhile a number of friends of the bridegroom (and among them those specially selected to receive the bride) assemble at his residence for the pur-

2 And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

3 They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them :

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.



pose of welcoming the bride to her new home ; and on hearing of the approach of the procession, they sally forth, with lighted "lamps" or torches, to meet the coming party.* These "lamps" probably resembled that given in the annexed engraving, taken from Monro's *Summer Rambles in Syria*.

Verses 2-4. *Five of them were wise, and five foolish*] The words rendered "wise" and "foolish" would be better

* An illustration, perhaps more in point, because practised by a company of Jews, is furnished by Dr. Henderson. He says, (*Bib. Researches*, p. 217,) "At Kamenitz Podolskoi [in Poland] we were stunned by the noise of a procession, led on by a band of musicians playing on tambourines and cymbals, which passed our windows. On inquiry we learned that it consisted of a Jewish bridegroom and his young friends, proceeding to the house of the bride's father, to convey her home to her future residence. In a short time they returned with such a profusion of lights as quite illuminated the street. The bride, deeply veiled, was led along in triumph, accompanied by her virgins, each with a candle in her hand, who, with the young men, sung and danced before her and the bridegroom. The scene presented an illustration of the parable recorded Matt. xxv., and we were particularly reminded of the appropriate nature of the injunction to watch and be ready ; for the re-procession must have commenced immediately on the arrival of the bridegroom."

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

translated *prudent* or *cautious*, and *inconsiderate* or *careless*. The first five were prudent, in that they "took oil in their vessels," or flasks, besides what they had in their "lamps;" so that if the bridegroom should be delayed, they might still have a supply of that necessary article; the others were inconsiderate, inasmuch as they neglected these precautions, and were in consequence prevented participating in the marriage feast. *The foolish took no oil*] Meaning, none but what they had in their "lamps."

Verses 5-9. *While the bridegroom tarried*] Some cause having delayed him beyond the hour appointed. *They slumbered and slept*] "They nodded, dozed, and then fell asleep." This is the import of the original. *A cry made*] Probably by some who had been sent forward to announce the approach of the procession. *Behold, the bridegroom cometh*] Meaning, he is at hand. *All arose, and trimmed their lamps*] All set about "trimming" their lamps; but the "foolish" virgins did not succeed, not having any oil. They consequently requested the others to supply them with this necessary

article, but were refused, on the ground that they had none to spare.

Verse 10. *Went in to the marriage*] To the marriage feast. *The door was shut*] The following, from "Ward's View of the Hindoos," contains some points of illustration, although it rather relates to the arrival of the bridegroom to take his bride, than to his coming home with her. "At a marriage, the procession of which I saw some years ago, the bridegroom came from a distance, and the bride lived at Serampore, to which place the bridegroom was to come by water. After waiting two hours, at length, near midnight, it was announced, as if in the very words of Scripture, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. All the persons employed [query, Were any of them females?] now lighted their lamps, and ran with them in their hands to fill up their stations in the procession; some of them had lost their lamps, and were unprepared; but it was then too late to seek them; and the cavalcade moved forward to the house of the bride, at which place the company entered a large and splendidly illuminated area before the house, covered with an awning, where a great number of friends, dressed in their best apparel, were seated upon mats. The bridegroom was carried in the arms of a friend, and placed on a superb seat in the midst of the company, where he sat a short time, and then went into the house, the door of which was immediately shut, and guarded by sepoys. I and others expostulated with the door-keepers, but in vain. Never was I so struck with our Lord's beautiful parable as at this moment: 'And the door was shut!' I was exceedingly anxious to be present while the marriage formulas were repeated, but was obliged to depart in disappointment!"

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, lord, open to us.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

13 Watch, therefore ; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Verses 11, 12. *Lord, lord, open to us*] That is, Admit us. The title "lord" is merely a respectful form of address, equivalent to our word sir ; its repetition denotes the earnestness of their entreaty. *He answered, I know you not*] Meaning, in the literal sense of the parable, I do not recognise you as being among those who accompanied myself and bride.—*Bloomfield*. This is to be understood as a denial of admittance.

Verse 13. *Watch, therefore*] This charge discloses the point of the parable : and shows it to have been spoken to encourage Christ's followers to a course of steady watchfulness and obedience, by the consideration of their Lord's acceptance and approval of those who should thus continue to "watch," and of the ultimate rejection and consequent misery of such as would not.

The following remarks on the mystical meaning of the parable are chiefly drawn from the able "Exposition" of Mr. Watson :—1. The virgins represent persons who were not only professed followers of Christ, but who had *all actually been under the influence of grace*. (Hypocritical professors are not included.) There was a time when the lamps of the whole ten had been furnished with oil, and were all burning : a time, too, when even the foolish virgins were at their post of duty, waiting for the bridegroom. But they had not a sufficient supply of oil, and the delay of the bridegroom discovered its deficiency.

The parable is specially designed to warn against resting in a *superficial* and *partial* piety.

2. Though all the persons represented by the ten virgins are to be considered as under the influence of grace, yet the work in the hearts of some of them was more deep and effectual than in the others. The terms "wise" and "foolish" are to be understood in the sense of *prudent foresight* and *the contrary*; and the first implies that steady regard to all future dangers and trials of grace which leads to a careful preparation for them. This is beautifully represented under the figure of the prudent virgins taking oil *in their vessels with their lamps*; for although it is true that we cannot so lay up a store of grace as to render us less dependant upon the aid of God in future time than at the present hour, yet the vigorous use of our present spiritual strength—that is, of that moral power we derive from the influence of the Holy Spirit—so leads to those richer communications from God, and so strengthens the habit of holy decision in the will, and serves so to confirm the right and vigorous tendency of the affections, that he who is faithful to *present* grace, does by that constantly contribute to his *future* safety. The foolish virgins, therefore, represent those who do not prudently look forward to the dangers and conflicts of future life, or give up themselves fully to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ," but sink into carelessness and lukewarmness of spirit. In this case the oil of the lamp burns out, and there is no supply in the vessel, because their hearts are withdrawn from God. Thus the principle of spiritual life perishes, and death (if it finds the person in this state) cuts off for ever the possibility of restoration.

3. The *marriage* represents the eternal union of Christ

with his faithful church: and the bringing home the bride, the glorification of the church in heaven. She is to be brought to the house of the Bridegroom, "adorned as a bride for her husband," arrayed in all the beauty and glory of grace and purity, to be for ever with him, to receive all the expressions of his love, and to render them back with entire and unabated affection.

4. The *tarrying* of the bridegroom represents the delay of Christ's final advent: yet as the day of our death is, for all practical purposes, as the end of the world to us; and as both the time of judgment and of our being called from life are equally uncertain; it is requisite that we live in a state of continual preparation for these events.

5. It is added, "they all slumbered and slept." The scope and design of the parable requires us to understand this slumbering and sleeping to represent *death*. While the Bridegroom tarrys, the successive generations of Christians, whether prepared or not for their Lord's coming, sleep in death: and it is the last day only that shall fully declare which of them have taken oil in their vessels, that is, whose hearts are in a state of preparedness to hail his second advent with joy, and to enter into his everlasting kingdom.

6. The *coming of the bridegroom* represents the sudden appearance of Christ at the last day; the *arising* of the virgins, the resurrection from the dead; and the *trimming of the lamps*, the resumption of that profession of devotedness to Christ, and attention to the duty of "waiting for his appearing," which they had assumed during their earthly existence. Both the wise and the foolish virgins arose for this purpose; but it is to be remarked that the wise only were able to rekindle

their lamps, as they only had provided oil for this purpose. Thus we are taught that those only whom the sanctifying grace of God has put into a state of due preparation for eternity will be able successfully to resume their profession. This lamp, the outward visible sign of connection with Christ, is in all others for ever quenched by death, and can never again be lighted up. The oil, the small measure of grace, which once supplied its flame, is consumed; the vessel of the heart, which ought to have been replenished with it, is empty; and the opportunity for obtaining a supply is past. We are not, therefore, to suppose that there is any thing in the case of persons found unprepared for the second coming of our Lord, to answer *minutely* to the application of the foolish virgins to the wise to give them of their oil, as though they should apply to them for grace; or in the answer, "Go unto them that sell, and buy for yourselves." The general and solemn admonition and moral of this part of the parable is, that the case of all who, at the second coming of Christ, are found destitute of holy preparation for that event, will be as utterly hopeless as was that of the five virgins who, when the cry, "The bridegroom cometh!" was already heard, vainly endeavoured to procure oil when the time would not admit of its being obtained before the bridegroom had entered his house, and the doors were shut. It is this impossibility of repairing, when Christ shall come in his glory, a previous partial neglect of salvation, which is the great lesson intended to be conveyed.

7. The going in to the marriage of *such as were* READY, denotes that heaven is prepared only for such as are rendered "meet" for it by sanctifying grace; and the *shutting of the door*, the eternal exclusion of all

LESSON XI.

[A. D. 29.]

Parable of the talents—Proceedings at the day of judgment.

MATT. XXV. 14-46.

FOR *the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.*

others. Nor can a former profession of discipleship, nor even former experience of any degree of grace, if lost, avail as a plea for admission, even should such plea be made. When the five foolish virgins made their earnest application, the stern reply of a slighted Saviour was, *I know you not; that is, I approve you not.* To the whole our Lord adds the general moral, "Watch, therefore," &c.; where, by "watchfulness," is meant all that is implied by the prudence and foresight of the wise virgins; a steady regard to the certainty of Christ's coming, however long delayed; and full and suitable preparation for it. Where these do not meet, the habit of true Christian watchfulness is not acquired; and the result may be fatal.

Reader, may the Holy Spirit preserve thee and me blameless to the day of Christ! Amen.

NOTES ON MATT. XXV. 14-46.

Verse 14. *The kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling, &c.*] Rather, who is *about* to travel. The meaning is, that the proceedings in "the kingdom of heaven," or God's moral government, may be compared to the conduct of a man who, being about to take a

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

journey into a distant country, should call his servants, assign to each his duties, with ample means for their accomplishment, and on his return award to each a recompense suited to his conduct. This parable implies, says Matthew Henry, that we are in a state of work and business, as the former implies that we are in a state of expectancy. *That* shows the necessity of habitual preparation, *this* the importance of actual diligence in our present work and service. In *that* we are stirred up to do well for our own souls; in *this* we are instructed to lay out ourselves for the glory of God and the good of others. *Delivered unto them his goods*] Intrusted them with a certain portion of his property, with which they were to trade for his benefit; their reward being proportioned (as the sequel shows) to their fidelity and success. This usage is of very ancient date in the East, where it is still, to some extent, practised. It is also followed, with some slight modifications, in Russia.

Verse 15. *To one he gave five talents*] The word "talent," like our word dollar, is a term given to a piece of money, valued, if of silver, by some at rather more than fifteen hundred dollars of our currency; if of gold, at about twenty-four thousand three hundred dollars. *To every one according to his several ability*] In proportion to the business habits of each, or to his opportunities of employing the money to advantage. Some of the servants might safely be intrusted with much larger sums than others, because they could use them to better account. The "talents" represent the various gifts, and opportunities for employing them for the benefit of our-

16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

selves and of others, with which Christians are favoured; and our Lord is graciously pleased to account the diligent improvement of these gifts and opportunities to be a profiting of himself: not that they are such in reality, but he kindly rewards them *as though they were*. This presents a fine view of the benevolence of God: showing that whatever is done to promote the happiness and salvation of any of his rational creatures, he regards as done for his own advantage. It is, perhaps, worthy of remark, that as every servant had at least *one talent* committed to him for improvement, so every Christian, as the servant of Jesus, has the means of usefulness assigned to him; and though in a lower degree than some, yet, at the lowest, fully equal to the work required of him: and if he diligently improve the *one* talent, he will as surely obtain the approval of his Lord, and be received into glory, as though he had five talents conferred on him, and suitably improved them all. *Straightway took his journey*] Immediately commenced it.

Verses 16-18. *He that had received the five talents—made other five*] As wealth, rightly and industriously occupied, produces wealth, so does the diligent and prayerful use of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit tend to the increase of those gifts and graces. The communication of religious knowledge produces religious knowledge, and that both in him who communicates and in others. The influences of piety exerted on others increases our own, and usually is successful as to many of those for whose spiritual good we are

18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst

seriously and earnestly concerned. *He that had received one—hid his lord's money*] And so did not attempt to improve it, or acquire more property. This servant appears to represent a numerous class of professing Christians, who are so far influenced by the apprehension of Christ's displeasure as to avoid all direct abuse of the talents intrusted to them, but who are not animated into exertion and zeal by the noble desire of approving themselves to their Lord, and of attaining the honours and larger rewards of the eternal world. They run not for this prize, because they possess not spirituality enough to value it. See further on Luke xviii. 20, 21, vol. iii, pp. 354, 355.

Verse 19. *After a long time the lord cometh*] Returneth from his journey. This denotes the coming of Christ at the last day. *Reckoneth with them*] Called them to a settlement of their accounts. The expression denotes that the lord subjected the accounts of *each* of these servants to a close examination, and settled with them accordingly. From this we may learn, in reference to the day of judgment, that "every one shall give account of himself to God." Though there may not then be the formality of a *particular* investigation, the effect will be the same as if every individual had a personal and particular trial, and an express decision on his formally stated case; for each will have a secret consciousness that the Judge is dealing with him according to his deservings.—*Watson.*

unto me five talents : behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Verses 20, 21. *Lord—I have gained five talents*] “This,” says Mr. Watson, “was successful trading, and is designed to show the abundant increase of good which would be produced in the world by entire fidelity in the discharge of all the active duties of the Christian life. This is a most animating motive to excite the zeal of Christians ; and its truth is confirmed by fact. The decline of religion in the world has in all ages resulted, not so much from the obstinacy of the wicked, as from the slothfulness of Christians.” *Well done, &c.*] It is roundly asserted by some, that because God is the author of spiritual as well as of natural life, and that because it is by the free bestowment of his grace only that works “good and acceptable” can be performed, the faithful servant of Christ is not *worthy* of any commendation for his patient continuance in well-doing. But is not this view erroneous ? It is undoubtedly true that his best efforts, in themselves considered, cannot atone for a single sin, much less furnish any meritorious claim to ultimate glorification ; the joys of heaven must, from their nature, be rewards not of merit, but of grace : still it does appear to be the sense of Scripture, and we think is clearly taught in this parable, that he who consecrates himself to the service of God, and, under the influences of the Holy Ghost, continues to ornament his profession of discipleship by “a holy life and godly conversation,” being at the same time careful to do all the good in his

22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents : behold, I have gained two other talents besides them.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came, and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed :

power, that he may thus glorify God before men, is worthy of commendation, and will receive it. He had the *power* to do otherwise, and if he acted contrarily, would be justly subject to blame ; but having *voluntarily* assumed and steadfastly persevered in the discharge of the duties of a follower of Christ, he is fairly entitled to approval. *Ruler over many things*] Promote thee to high authority. By this is represented the vast reward which shall be conferred on such of Christ's followers as shall have been distinguished for their devotion to his cause on earth. *Enter into the joy of thy lord*] Enter upon that enjoyment which thy master has prepared for thee. By this is typified the glorious state of the blessed in heaven. Similar approval and reward was conferred on the servant who had diligently improved the *two* talents intrusted to him, though not to the same extent. If, however, the reward was not as *great*, it was equally *felicitous*, being fully equal to the capacity for enjoyment.

Verses 24-27. *Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man*] That is, knew thee *to be* "a hard" or avaricious man. *Reaping where thou hast not sown, &c.*] This is probably a proverbial expression, denoting that he

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed;

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.

required unreasonable and oppressive service. These excuses are not to be understood as describing any thing which shall be alleged at the great day of account; but as intended by our Lord to expose the false views upon which the slothful palliate and disguise their neglects, and which, in the end, lead to fatal results. *I was afraid*] Meaning, that he was fearful that he could not so improve his "talent" as to equal the expectation of his master. This was evidently a mere excuse; but our Lord puts this weak plea into the mouth of the servant, to show that in such case no *reasonable* apology could be made. *Lo, there thou hast that is thine*] His plea, then, would seem to be, that because he had not squandered his talent, he should at least escape punishment, though he might fail of reward. This, however, could not be, for he had been actually *disobedient*. The Lord had enjoined on him the diligent improvement of the property deposited with him, and the neglect of this injunction amounted to rebellion, and consequently he was guilty. But besides this, he entertained very dishonourable views of his master, and was slanderous in his remarks. Hence he is adjudged to be not only *slothful*, but *wicked*. *His lord answered—Thou knowest that I reap, &c.*] This language is not to be taken as an

29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance : but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness : there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

admission of the truth of this servant's charge, but simply as an argument that, even *if it were so*, (but which was not the case,) the servant was nevertheless guilty, for he ought then, according to his own showing, to have taken steps which would have resulted in at least *some gain* from the property in his hand. The "exchangers" not only exchanged coins, but, like our *bankers*, received money at deposit at certain rates of interest, which they loaned to others at increased rates. "Usury," here, simply denotes lawful interest.

Verse 29. *Unto every one that hath*] Meaning, that hath *improved*, or *used well*. *Shall be given*] He shall be intrusted, as was this faithful servant, with more. *From him that hath not, &c.*] That hath not suitably employed the talents with which he was favoured. It seems, therefore, to be a fixed rule of the divine government, that those who profitably use what is committed to them shall be esteemed worthy of higher trusts, and those who neglect to improve their advantages shall be deprived of them.

Verse 30. *Cast the unprofitable (or useless) servant into outer darkness*] Into the farthest dark prison, as the image of the place of punishment in Hades.—*Robinson*. "This," says Doddridge, "is no other than the dungeon of hell, to which every unfaithful servant must expect to be condemned in that approaching day of general account." Some commentators take the original, rendered here "unprofitable," in the general sense

31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations; and

of *bad*, or *wicked*. Such, in the language of Mr. Watson, "lose sight of the scope of the parable itself. That this servant was *bad* is true, but in a particular sense, because he was *unprofitable*." *Weeping, and gnashing of teeth*] Terms descriptive of acute misery.

Verse 31. To the parables of the virgins and of the talents, in both which allusion is made, under the figure of the coming of the bridegroom and the return of a master from a distant journey, to the second advent of Christ, our Lord here adds a magnificent and solemn description of that great event. *When the Son of man shall come in his glory*] In the glory which properly belongs to him: but in which he had not yet appeared. *And all the holy angels with him*] As the ministers of his will, and to be the spectators of a scene which will yield them instruction and admonition for ever. *Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory*] Or, his glorious throne. This expressive language is not, probably, to be taken literally, as if there would be a material throne or seat on which Christ would sit: but to be understood as expressing the idea that he would come as a King and Judge, to assemble his subjects before him, and appoint them their rewards or punishments. We have the same splendid imagery in Rev. xx. 11, "And I saw a great white" or dazzling "throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away."

Verse 32. *Before him shall be gathered all nations*] That is, all the living and all the dead of the whole world. 2 Cor. v. 10; Rev. xx. 12, 13. *And he shall*

he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats :

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

separate them one from another] “This will be done with unerring penetration and with infinite equity, the vast multitude moving to the right hand or to the left under the influence of his mighty power, the consciousness of each answering to the impulse, and, as to the wicked, withering every effort at resistance.”—*Watson*.

“Great God! what do I see and hear?

The end of things created!

The Judge of mankind doth appear,

On clouds of glory seated!

The trumpet sounds! the graves restore

The dead which they contained before!

Prepare, my soul, to meet him!”—*Luther*.

As a shepherd divideth, &c.] The metaphor is taken from the practice of ancient shepherds, who, though they kept both sheep and goats, had them in different flocks, and hastily separated them if they became mingled. Livy speaks of their particularity in this respect. (Liv. b. xxiv, c. 3.)

Verse 33. *He shall set the sheep on his right hand*] By “sheep,” here, righteous persons are meant, and by “goats,” the wicked: and the placing them on the right and left hand, denotes the approval of the former, and the condemnation of the latter. This would be readily understood by the apostles; for it appears, from the statements of Jewish writers, that in the sanhedrim two scribes stood before the judges, one on their right, the other on their left; and that the scribe on the right hand

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world :

wrote the sentence of acquittal, and the scribe on the left hand that of condemnation. Agreeably to which custom they have a saying, "There is a right hand and a left hand with the Lord ; they that are on the right hand are for absolution, (are to be acquitted,) and they that are on the left hand are for condemnation," (are to be condemned.)

Verses 34-36. *Then shall the King say, &c.*] Our Lord may have here termed himself "the King," in order to show the nature of his kingdom, and remove those mistaken views which even still obscured the judgment of the disciples, and rendered them inapt to receive spiritual views. Messiah is indeed a King ; but he is here seen, not distributing earthly, but heavenly rewards ; not inflicting temporal, but eternal punishments. And his speaking of himself by this title "adds," says Doddridge, "unutterable beauty to the condescending words he is represented as speaking on this great occasion." *Come, ye blessed of my Father*] This language conveys the highest commendation. *Inherit the kingdom prepared for you*] Enter upon the enjoyment of that state of inexpressible happiness designed for you by God, and to the possession of which you have been chosen heirs. Christians are often termed heirs of God. Rom. viii. 17 ; Gal. iv. 67, &c. *From the foundation of the world*] Meaning, from its creation. We may here learn that it was the eternal purpose of God to raise to the felicity of heaven all who should truly believe in Christ, and remain his faithful followers to the end of life. For them *as believers*, not as a specific number selected

35 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

arbitrarily from the mass of mankind, was this state of glory, honour, and immortality appointed.

Verses 35, 36. After this general description of the pomp and solemnity of the final judgment, our Lord proceeds to give the reasons for his public approval of the righteous, and his equally public disapproval of the wicked. These reasons, however, observes Mr. Watson, are not the only ones in either case. The wicked are not punished *solely* because they have been fruitless in works of mercy, nor are the righteous blessed *merely* because they have abounded in them. The works are taken in each case as manifestations of *character*; and are specified to show the importance attached to them, and that where religion is not *practical*, it is wholly false and delusive. That benevolent actions, separated from a principle of love to God and man, cannot avail to final justification, we are distinctly taught by Paul, who says, (1 Cor. xiii. 3,) that if a man "give all his goods to feed the poor, and have not charity," or love, "it profiteth him nothing;" while, on the other hand, St. James instructs us (ii. 26) in the equally important truth that "faith without works is dead," and therefore inefficacious to the saving of the soul. The three great ends of Christ's religion are, to reconcile men to God, to renew the heart in righteousness, and to inspire that universal philanthropy which shall lead to the most beneficent acts of mercy to others; and as Jesus had inculcated other virtues in preceding parables, so

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

now, that he may present the picture of "the man of God made perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work," he exhibits the fruitful faith and charity of his people in their practical benevolence, and confers upon their good works the high rewards of his kingdom. *Ye gave me meat*] That is, *food*: the word is meant to include the various kinds of sustenance, and is not to be confined, therefore, to animal food. *Ye took me in*] Received me kindly into your houses. The exercise of hospitality to strangers was, in Eastern countries, where there were but few, if any, public houses, deemed an important duty and a great virtue. *Naked*] Ill clothed, or destitute of suitable clothing. *Visited me*] Meaning, visited with the design of relieving or comforting me.

Verses 37-39. *Then shall the righteous answer*] This declaration is not, we think, to be understood literally; but simply as importing that such language would very properly describe the feelings of the "righteous." It is not likely that either these or the "wicked" will make answer to the decisions of their omniscient Judge, but that all hearts will bow in acquiescence to his sentence. *When saw we thee an hungered, &c.*] The manner in which the case was put, as though they had ministered to the Lord personally, seems to excite the astonishment of those on the right hand, a large majority

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

of whom had never even seen him in the flesh, and leads to a modest disclaimer, as though conscious he were conferring on them too high honour. The reader will not fail to mark the beauty with which the humility of the righteous, and the total absence of all idea of merit on their part, are set forth.

Verse 40. *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto—these my brethren*] By “brethren,” here, many commentators understand Christ’s actual followers to be meant, and *they only*. But is not this limitation injurious to the passage? Through taking on himself our nature, Jesus became the brother of every human being, and even in his exalted and glorified state recognises all men in this relation. Besides, by limiting the term “brethren” to the household of faith, the various acts of Christian beneficence which are performed for the benefit of such poor or afflicted persons as are not followers of Christ would go unrewarded; whereas the Scriptures enjoin on us to do good unto *all men*, assuring us that *none* of these works of faith or labours of love shall be forgotten or neglected by God. *Ye have done it unto me*] This means that he would account it *as done unto himself*, and would reward accordingly. What astonishing condescension is here! Surely the benevolence of Christ can have but one stronger manifestation than this identification of himself with all poor and afflicted persons throughout the world, in all ages; and that one he has not failed to exhibit in the sacrifice of himself to redeem our fallen race.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels :

42 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink :

Verse 41. *Depart from me, ye cursed*] These words are addressed to those on the "left hand"—the wicked. During their probationary state the Spirit of God had wooed them to embrace Christ as their Saviour, but they refused ; now they are rejected by him, and about to be punished. Hence they are termed "cursed." John iii. 36. *Into everlasting fire*] Into eternal perdition ; where their sufferings would be so acute as to be aptly represented by the continual gnawings of devouring fires. *Prepared for the devil and his angels*] Christ does not say that this "everlasting fire" was prepared for these evil spirits, as the kingdom of heaven was prepared for the righteous, "from the foundation of the world : " but simply, that it was "prepared for the devil and his angels," although contrary, doubtless, to the gracious purpose for which they were created. They found, the moment they were brought into existence, a glorious heaven prepared for them, in the presence of their God, where he designed they should continue to dwell ; and it was not until they actually rebelled, that divine justice kindled up an *everlasting fire* for their punishment. Into this same fire, and in company with these rebellious spirits, (as having with them sinned,) shall all the wicked be at last driven from the presence of Him who had never been to them an unrelenting Judge, had they not rejected him as a merciful and gracious Saviour.—*Watson*.

Verses 42, 43. *For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat, &c.*] It will be borne in mind that the

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

condemnation of the wicked will not rest on the *mere absence* of works of benevolence, but also on the evidence thus afforded of the lack of a true and lively faith; for wheresoever a true faith exists, it will produce, to a greater or less extent, the fruit of good works.

Verse 46. *These shall go away into everlasting punishment*] This is spoken of those persons on the "left hand." "The original word here translated 'punishment,' says Mr. Barnes, "means *torment*, or suffering induced by crime. The noun is used but in one other place in the New Testament, namely, 1 John iv. 18, 'Fear hath *torment*.' The verb from which the noun is derived is twice used. Acts iv. 21; 2 Pet. ii. 9. In all these places it denotes anguish, suffering, punishment. It does not mean simply a *state* or *condition*, but absolute, positive suffering; and if this word does not teach it, no word *could* express the idea that the wicked would suffer. The word rendered 'everlasting' denotes *always being*." *The righteous into life eternal*] That is, into unending happiness. The word rendered "everlasting" in the former clause of this verse is the same as is here translated "eternal." Mr. Watson thinks this verse is

LESSON XII.

[A. D. 29.]

Christ informs the apostles of the time of his approaching death—The sanhedrim consult how they may arrest him—Judas Iscariot agrees to betray him into their hands.—Matt. xxvi. 1-5, and 14-16; Mark xiv. 1, 2, 10, 11; Luke xxii. 1-13.

MATT. xxvi. 1-5, and 14-16.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

2 Ye know that after two days is *the feast of the passover*, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

“decisive of the doctrine of the eternity of the punishment of the wicked;” and that “no reasonings of men can avail against its clear and unequivocal meaning. No one disputes the endless duration of the happiness reserved for the righteous in heaven; why should the eternity of future punishment be controverted more than that, when the term applied to the duration of both is not merely of similar import, but actually THE SAME?” As, then, the decisions of the day of judgment are irreversible, and those decisions will be based on our views and conduct here, “what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness!”

NOTES ON MATT. xxvi. 1-5, and 14-16.

Verses 1, 2. *When Jesus had finished all these sayings*] Spoken, probably, of the discourse delivered on the mount of Olives, and recorded Matt. xxiv., xxv. *Jesus said,—Ye know that after two days*] “After two

3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

days" means, on the second day thereafter. *Is the passover*] This was said on Wednesday, the 12th of Nisan; the time of killing the passover was before sunset on the 14th of that month, which this year fell on Friday. For a notice of this festival, see vol. i, pp. 145-148. *The Son of man is betrayed*] Meaning, *will be betrayed*. It is a common Scriptural usage to express an event spoken of prophetically as having actually happened. The fifty-third of Isaiah furnishes another example. The expression "ye know" is to be limited to the disciples' knowledge that "after two days" the passover would be held; for they had no knowledge that their beloved Master would then be crucified, he never having given them this information until now.

Verses 3, 4. *Then assembled the chief priests, scribes, and elders*] These persons composed the sanhedrim, the highest court of the Jews. (See note on Matt. xxi. 23, pp. 68, 69.) *The palace of the high priest*] The residence of that officer. This, according to the Babylonian Talmud, was not their usual place of assembling; for from that authority it appears that the sanhedrim were at this time accustomed to meet at a place within the precincts of the temple called *chanoth*, or the sheds; and we may reasonably suppose that they met on this occasion at the mansion of the high priest, for the sake of privacy. It is also highly probable that this was a nocturnal meeting; for the high priest, during the day, was in attendance at the temple, where he had a suitable apartment called the chamber of the high priest. *Who was called Caiaphas*] "This was his surname, his proper

4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him*.

5 But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

name being Joseph. He was appointed high priest by Valerius Gratus, Pilate's predecessor in the government of Judea, toward the end of his administration, (about A. D. 24,) and his removal from office was one of the first acts of Vitellius, after the recall of Pilate; (A. D. 36;) he was consequently high priest during the whole of Pilate's administration. It is not known what became of him after this. *Consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty*] That is, (as Mark has it, xiv. 1,) "by craft." This was with the design of putting him to death.

Verse 5. *Not on the feast-day*] The word "day" is not in the original, but has been introduced by our translators. As the festivals of the passover and unleavened bread continued eight days, and the same reasons which rendered it desirable that Jesus should not be publicly apprehended on the *first day* would apply with equal force to the remaining seven, it is better to read the clause, *not during the feast. Lest there be an uproar*] From this it would seem the sanhedrim still dreaded the popularity of Christ; and feared that publicly to arrest him would cause a tumult—perhaps a serious riot. Luke says explicitly (xxii. 2) that they desired to accomplish their purposes privately, because "they *feared* the people." The providence of God, however, frustrated their artful designs, and the event they wished to conduct throughout with the greatest privacy and silence was ultimately accompanied by all possible publicity. Their plan was changed by the offer of Judas to betray Jesus, and the whole was overruled by Heaven for the accom-

14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

plishment of its own purposes, which were, not that Christ should be put to death privately by assassination, or even by regular trial, when there should be comparatively few to witness his death and resurrection, and the strange signs which accompanied them; but that there should be *multitudes of witnesses* of these events, that infidelity might never be able to allege they *were done in a corner*; that they should take place when many thousands of Jews and proselytes from all parts were assembled at Jerusalem, that thus the account both of his *crucifixion* and *resurrection* (which, it will be remembered, also took place during the continuance of the feast) should be transmitted by these means to distant places, and so prepare the way for the more successful proclamation of his gospel.

Verses 6-13. [The supper and anointing at Bethany, recorded in these verses, have been already noticed. See vol. iii, pp. 382-392.]

Verse 14. *Then one of the twelve, Judas Iscariot, &c.*] That is, Judas, the man of Kerioth. "Iscariot" formed no part of his name; but was added to distinguish him from the other Judas. The adverb of time, rendered "then," is of indefinite signification. Most commentators understand it to connect what follows with verse 3, and regard the narration given verses 4-13 as parenthetical, being merely introduced by Matthew and Mark in this place for the purpose of furnishing a suitable introduction to the account of the betrayal of Christ, by revealing the character of Iscariot; while John is considered as preserving the true order of time. See

15 And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I

John xii. 1. In this view the "then" denotes that Judas presented himself to the sanhedrim while they were yet unresolved what measures to adopt to remove Jesus. It is not unlikely that, ignorant of the secret assembling of the council, Judas went to the residence of the high priest for the purpose of arranging with him the terms on which he would betray Christ, for that this was his intention Mark expressly declares. Mark xiv. 10. Luke informs us (xxii. 3) that Iscariot acted in this matter under Satanic influence; "Satan," says he, "entered into Judas Iscariot." Probably he tempted Judas by appealing to his avaricious disposition, representing to him that he had now a favourable opportunity for making money by selling to them his Lord. That his proposal to betray Christ was highly acceptable to the sanhedrim we have full evidence; for Mark states, (xiv. 11,) that "when they heard it they were glad, and promised to give him money;" especially as they would by this means be able to apprehend Jesus unknown to the people. That the *private* seizure of Christ's person formed a prominent feature in their arrangement is clear from the record of Luke, (xxii. 6,) that Judas "promised—and sought opportunity to betray him *in the absence of the multitude*."

Verse 15. *What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you*] Meaning, "what will ye give me *to deliver him*?" This inquiry is in strict keeping with the character of Judas. Avarice was his leading passion; and he here shows himself anxious to make a good and secure bargain before he ventures upon the execution of his villanous intent. He was probably at first a sin-

will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

cere and teachable disciple; but his carrying the bag which contained the common stock of money from which the necessities of the apostolic family and the wants of the poor were relieved, and which we may presume was replenished from time to time by the offerings of a few more opulent disciples, became, it is likely, the first cause of his fall. As he is called a "thief," (John xii. 6,) he probably began to do wrong by applying part of this common stock to his own private use; and his natural avarice being thus awakened and fed, his heart became obdurate, his conscience seared, and his judgment blinded. [Let the Christian, and especially the young convert, take warning from this case, and guard against the beginnings of evil.] The circumstance of our Lord's declining to avail himself of so many opportunities of declaring himself a king, and turning the tide of popular feeling in his favour, might also operate upon the earthly and disappointed mind of Judas, and lead him greatly to doubt, or utterly to disbelieve, whether Jesus was the Messiah he once believed him to be. Added to all this was the busy agency of Satan. *They covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver*] By "pieces of silver" it is generally supposed that Jewish shekels are meant. Some MSS. read *staters*, which amounts to the same thing; for the shekel and the stater were of correspondent value. If the supposition that the shekel is the coin alluded to be correct, the amount which Judas received for his treachery would be eighteen dollars of our currency, valuing the shekel at sixty cents. This was the price paid for the loss of a slave, as fixed by the law of Moses. Exod. xxi. 32.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

LUKE xxii. 7-13.

7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

Verse 16. *He sought opportunity to betray him*] That is, a *convenient* opportunity, in "the absence of the multitude." Mark xiv. 11; Luke xxii. 6. Here was the chief difficulty—how to deliver him into the hands of the sanhedrim unknown to the multitude, and without exciting a tumult. He was not long, however, in finding the occasion he sought.

LUKE xxii. 7-13.

Verse 7. *Then came the day of unleavened bread*] So called because the Jews on this day began to eat bread which had not been fermented, or "raised," as we commonly term it. Mark says (xiv. 12) this was on "the first day of unleavened bread." The Mosaic law prescribed that at the passover, and for the seven following days, no leavened bread should be used; (Exod. xii. 18-20;) hence this festival was indifferently called "the passover" or "the feast of unleavened bread;" though, *strictly speaking*, the first day only was the passover, and the following seven the festival of unleavened bread. See 2 Chron. xxxv. 17, and Ezra vi. 19, 22. It is not improbable that this regulation had a mystical meaning; denoting that they should serve God with single-heartedness and sincerity. See 1 Cor. v. 8. So particular were the Jews in their observance of the requirement that "leaven should not be seen in all their quarters," (Exod. xiii. 7,) that they made the most dili-

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

gent search in every part of their dwellings, and if any leaven was found it was immediately destroyed. Allen says that the modern Jews are in this respect equally punctilious. *When the passover must be killed*] By "passover," here, the paschal lamb is meant. On the night before the Israelites were delivered from Egyptian bondage, the Lord had commanded a lamb (or kid) to be slain, and its blood to be sprinkled on the door-posts of every house inhabited by the Hebrews, and the inmates of such houses as were marked by this "token" were "passed over;" while the first-born of every family on whose dwelling no sprinkled blood appeared was smitten. In commemoration of this event the Israelites were commanded thenceforward to sacrifice annually, on the 14th of Nisan, a lamb for every household or company who should agree to eat the feast together, (Exod. xii. 3, 4,) which companies are said by Jewish writers to have usually consisted of from ten to twenty persons each. It is in allusion to the saving effect of the sprinkled blood of the first paschal lamb that our Lord Jesus Christ is so beautifully termed (1 Cor. v. 7) "our passover, sacrificed for us;" for as *that* saved the obedient Israelites from temporal death, so does this the faithful believer from spiritual and eternal death.

Verse 8. *Go and prepare us the passover*] This conversation probably took place on the morning of Thursday, the 13th of Nisan; and in the evening of the *same day* (according to our method of computing time) our Lord ate his passover. See further on Luke xxii. 14, pp. 225-231. In the "preparation" here referred to

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

was included the purchase and slaying of the lamb; the procuring of the necessary accompaniments to the festival, as unleavened bread, bitter herbs, wine, &c. After the erection of the temple the paschal lamb was always slain there. The law required that it should be roasted whole, that not one of its bones should be broken, and that it should be all eaten that night; or, if any part were left, it was to be burnt.

Verses 9, 10. *Where wilt thou that we prepare*] Meaning, at whose house shall it be eaten? At the great festivals the inhabitants of Jerusalem were in the habit of accommodating strangers with rooms, and that without any charge; nor, indeed, was any compensation taken; but the apartments were claimed as of right. So our Lord, according to Matthew, (xxvi. 18,) simply notifies the person at whose dwelling he meant to keep the passover of his wish to that effect, saying, "I will keep the passover at thy house." The desire to accommodate their brethren was so strongly manifested by the people of Jerusalem, that, as we are told by Jewish writers, notwithstanding the immense multitudes which resorted on such occasions to the city, "a man could never say to his friend, 'I have not found a fire to roast the passover lamb in Jerusalem, nor have I wanted a bed to sleep on in Jerusalem.'"—*Gill—Pict. Bible.* *When ye are entered into the city*] Jerusalem. *There shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water*] This little inci-

11 And ye shall say unto the good man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

12 And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

dent is possessed of interest, as exhibiting the omniscience of Christ. The whole narrative shows that there was no trickery in the matter, but that the meeting was, humanly speaking, purely accidental. As water was almost universally brought in the morning and evening, it is probable that this was either in the earlier or later part of the day. We prefer supposing it to have been on Thursday morning, the 13th of Nisan.

Verses 11, 12. *The Master saith*] This was a title by which Jesus seems to have been frequently designated among his followers, and by which he was most familiarly addressed by them. See instances of each, John xi. 28; xiii. 13. From its use in the present instance, and the readiness with which the man seems to have comprehended who was meant, it is reasonably inferred that he was one of Christ's disciples. *Where is the guest-chamber, &c.*] Meaning, the room that had been appropriated for the use of strangers during the celebration of the festival. Matthew's account of this message is more minute and touching: "The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house." Matt. xxvi. 18. The phrase, "My time is at hand," probably denotes that solemn and agonizing period often spoken of as *his hour*—the season of his sufferings and death. *He shall show you a room furnished*] The word rendered "furnished" literally means *spread*; that

LESSON XIII.

[A. D. 29.]

Christ partakes of his last passover—Again reproves the ambition of the apostles, and gives a beautiful instance of humility by washing the disciples' feet—He reveals his betrayer.—Matt. xxvi. 20–25; Mark xiv. 17–21; Luke xxii. 14–18; John xiii. 2–30.

LUKE xxii. 14–18.

AND when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

is, spread with carpets and *couches*, on which to recline at table while eating the passover.

Verse 13. *They went, and found as he had said]* That is, they found the man bearing the pitcher of water, and were shown by him to the “large upper room, furnished and prepared;” and there “they made ready the passover.”

NOTES ON LUKE xxii. 14–18.

Verse 14. *When the hour was come]* The “hour” or time he had fixed on for eating the passover. Mark (xiv. 17) says this was “in the evening.” The paschal lamb was, as has been shown, commanded to be slain on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, but was not eaten until some time after sunset, consequently not until the 15th; for the Jews began their day directly after sunset, not, as we do, immediately after midnight. It would seem, however, from John xviii. 28, that on this occasion Jesus kept the feast a day earlier than the Jews generally; for it is there said that when, on the following morning, he was brought before Pilate, the Jews “went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled,

but" remained outside, "*that they might eat the pass-over.*" In commenting on these words, Campbell and Watson, who both hold that our Lord did *not* antedate his passover, but celebrated it at the same time as the whole nation, suggest that they are to be understood, not of the "passover," properly so called, but of peace or thank-offerings, which being made during the prayers of the festival, were loosely spoken of as "the passover;" and cite Deut. xvi. 2, and 2 Chron. xxxv. 7-9, in confirmation of their opinion. But even admitting this view, (to which we think there are some objections,) the difficulty would not be removed; for, in chap. xix. 14, John observes, when speaking of the time of Pilate's pronouncing sentence on Christ, that "it was the *preparation of the passover*, about the sixth hour." The above-named expositors understand this "preparation" to refer, not to the passover feast, but to the sabbath. But there are strong objections to this view: for allowing that the time embraced between our Wednesday and Thursday evenings, on which Jesus certainly kept the passover, was the 14th, and not the 13th of Nisan, then from Thursday evening to Friday evening would be the 15th, and consequently a *sabbath*, (Num. xxviii. 17, 18,) on which "no servile work" was to be done. It would, therefore, have been unlawful for the Jews to have apprehended, tried, condemned, and crucified Christ on that day; and the Pharisees of our Lord's time, who formed the preponderating party in the sanhedrim, were too exact in the outward observance of the law to have thus daringly violated it. There is also an incident in the account of our Lord's celebration of the passover, which, though trifling in itself, is of considerable moment in settling this question. When Judas, at the intimation

of Christ that what he designed to do he should do quickly, suddenly left the room, some of the disciples thought he had gone to "*buy something* of which they had need;" (John xiii. 29;) a certain proof that this could not be the 15th, for not only would all shops be then closed on account of its being a sabbath, but all the resident and temporary inhabitants of Jerusalem would at that hour be engaged in the celebration of the passover. Neither could he have then gone, as he did, to the sanhedrim, and obtained the force he procured for the apprehension of Jesus. It is therefore certain that the Jews generally did *not* partake of the passover at the same time as did Christ and his apostles, but that he antedated his feast.

Another method of reconciling John's account with that of the other evangelists, and one which is supported by the authority of Dr. A. Clarke, and many other eminent commentators, is, that there might have been this year *two days* on which the passover was allowed to be slain and eaten. The Jews began their month on the appearance of the new moon; and when there was any doubt as to the day on which it made its first appearance, the passover might be legally sacrificed on *two days*, the 13th and the 14th of the month, for that which was accounted as the 14th by some was held by others to be but the 13th. This, however, seems a forced and unnatural conclusion, especially when it is considered that the law required the sacrifice to be made on one and the same day, and that the sanhedrim had full authority to fix the date, and failed not to assert their authority; and that no private opinion could weigh against their official appointment.

The only serious objections to our view that we can

think of are, 1st. That Mark (xiv. 12) speaks of "the first day of unleavened bread," on which the disciples were directed to prepare the passover, as that on which THEY, meaning, apparently, the Jews at large, "killed the passover;" and 2d. The equivalent declaration of Luke, (xiv. 7,) that on the day of unleavened bread "the passover *must* be killed." In answer to the first objection it may be plausibly urged that Mark may speak here, not of the act of the Jews generally, but of that of the disciples in particular. Let it but be supposed that our Lord had already acquainted his disciples with his intention of celebrating the feast *earlier than usual*, but had not yet told them where, and all difficulty is removed from the passage. And we think it not unlikely that such information had been given, though no note is taken of it; for the first two verses of Matthew xxvi. bear the appearance of an introduction to such a conversation. So, also, with the second objection; Luke may merely intend saying, that in order to meet Christ's wishes, the passover (for that particular family) *must be killed* on the 13th.

As to the supposed objection arising from the alleged illegality of slaying the paschal lamb on the 13th instead of the 14th day of the month, it will be remembered that He who appointed the time had a perfect right to change the period of its celebration, if he saw fit: especially if by so doing he brought about a greater resemblance between the type and the antitype than could otherwise have existed: and that such increased resemblance was thus obtained will be seen from the following remarks, abridged from Greswell's masterly dissertation:—"The entire system of types," says he, "must fall to the ground, if the sacrifice of the Jewish passover is not acknow-

ledged to have been designed for a type and an emblem of the sacrifice of the death of Christ. There could be no such thing as a type in the ancient dispensation if this was none. But that it was one, St. Paul asserts in the strongest terms—'Christ our Passover.' 1 Corinthians v. 7.

"Now, if the sacrifice of the Jewish passover was thus typical of the sacrifice of Christ, then the circumstances of *time* and *place* become of paramount importance. This sacrifice was limited from the first, in point of *time*, to one day, the 14th of Nisan; and in point of *place*, to that spot which God should select to fix his name there; which quarter, after the building of the temple, became permanently fixed to Jerusalem: accordingly, the place where Christ suffered was unquestionably Jerusalem; and if he suffered on the 14th of Nisan, (as we think St. John clearly implies,) the *time* would be as accordant as the place. But the analogy goes further than this: Josephus informs us, (*Wars*, b. vi, c. ix, § 3,) that at the ninth hour the sacrifice of the Jewish passover began to be offered, and it was at that hour that Jesus dismissed his spirit, and became a sacrifice for sin. Mark xv. 34-37.

"Again, as the paschal sacrifice was a lively type of the death of Christ, so was the offering of the wave-sheaf of his resurrection; and as, in allusion to the former, Paul calls him our Passover, so, in allusion to the latter, he calls him the First Fruits of them that slept. 1 Cor. xv. 20. To the exact fulfilment of the legal equity, then, it was just as necessary that the time of the resurrection should coincide with the time of the presentation of the first fruits, as that the time of Christ's death should have coincided with the time of the pass-

over. That presentation was fixed to the hour of *πρωι*, or sunrise, on the morning of the 16th of Nisan; which, if Christ suffered on the 14th, was actually the time of his rising from the grave: for if the Friday when he suffered was the 14th, the Sunday was the 16th; and as to the hour when he rose, it was, according to Mark, (xvi. 9,) the prescribed hour—the hour of *πρωι* itself. So exactly, on this one supposition that our Lord suffered on the Jewish passover day, does every circumstance in the legal symbol, both as concerns his death and as concerns his resurrection, harmonize with the symbolized truth; and so ill do they accord, on any other. For if Christ kept his passover on the 14th, he must have suffered on the 15th, have lain in the grave all the 16th, and have risen on the morning of the 17th: in which case not one of the above circumstances would harmonize with any thing in his passion.”

But we think that the strongest inferential argument against our Lord's eating the passover at the same time with the Jews, is to be found in the fact that if he had so done, then the day following would, to them, have been *a sabbath*:—and consequently a period on which no profane or common work would be done. Now, not to dwell on the improbability of having *two passover days*, when the law required all the people to eat it on one and the same day, is it to be supposed that those who held to the later day would so far have violated the conscience of those who held to the earlier date, as publicly to transact the most common business on that day? The case of Peter (Acts xii. 3, 4) shows that, while the great legal solemnities were going on, no criminal or prisoner, for whatever offence, was wont to be put on trial or to death. Yet not only did the courts arrest and

try, but even condemn and execute, Jesus on that day : as well as crucify the malefactors who suffered with him. All this would be an open and daring violation of the law which enjoins the sanctification of the day following that on which the passover was slain, which the rulers would not, at this time, have attempted, nor the people allowed. Taking the language of John, however, in its natural and obvious sense, all these difficulties are avoided ; for *then* the hour of slaying the paschal lamb would not have arrived, and consequently no law would be violated by the crucifixion of Christ, and that of the two malefactors, on that day.

He sat down—the twelve with him] “Sat down”—or rather, *reclined*—to partake of the paschal supper. Originally this meal was eaten “standing, with the loins girded, the feet sandalled, and a staff in the hand,” as though in great haste to depart ; but for many years these signs of haste had been dispensed with, and an appearance of the greatest leisure, ease, and safety substituted in their stead.

Perhaps it should be stated, that John introduces his account of the proceedings at this supper by saying, (xiii. 1,) “Now before the feast of the passover,”—meaning, we think, before the Jews killed their passover,—“when Jesus knew that his hour was come”—or was at hand—“that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.” What a beautiful exhibition of our Lord’s *love* is here given ! He knew that his “hour” was come—he was on the eve of his tremendous sufferings ; he also knew, that after a brief season of unutterable agony he should be again “in the bosom of the Father.” Yet neither the pressing sorrow nor the ap-

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

proaching joy held the uppermost place in his thoughts and feelings. "*His own*"—his disciples—his children—were lodged deep within the recesses of his soul, and neither present humiliation nor future glory could for a moment draw the veil of forgetfulness over them. Not only could no power destroy his love for them, there was nothing which could cause even a temporary cessation of that love; "having loved his own, which were in the world, *he loved them unto the end!*" And as was his love then, so is it *now*; as he loved those who were then his faithful followers, so does he love his present disciples;—and will love *them* unto the end.

Verses 15, 16. *He said unto them*] Said to the twelve, apparently as they reclined at table, though before they had commenced eating. *With desire I have desired to eat this passover*] That is, I have *greatly*, or, as the margin has it, *heartily desired*, to eat, &c. This strong desire may be plausibly accounted for, 1st., on the supposition that, as he was about to leave them, he desired once more to partake with them of one of the most impressive rites of the Jewish dispensation: his social feelings, and strong affection, may have prompted to this: 2d., that he eagerly desired to finish the work of man's salvation, which he knew could not be accomplished until the passover: 3d., that he designed then to institute, for the use and edification of his followers, throughout all coming time, the commemorative rite which is called after him,—the Lord's supper. *I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the*

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves :

kingdom of God] That is, until that redemption be completed, by the sacrifice of my own self, of which the safety procured for the Israelites by the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb was so lively a type. The words, "I will not eat until," &c., are generally understood as implying that he would no more eat of it, but that he and his disciples would meet in a state of future felicity—denoted by "the kingdom of God"—and there celebrate the full and perfect redemption of the church glorified.

Verses 17, 18. *He took the cup*] Meaning, the cup containing the wine. *And gave thanks*] The "thanks" given on these occasions was the usual formula, "Blessed be thou, O Lord, who hast created the fruit of the vine." Perhaps it may be well to notice here the ceremonies said by Jewish writers to have been commonly practised on celebrating the passover, as they throw light on some parts of our Saviour's proceedings. Whether he observed *all* those rites is perhaps questionable : some of them he certainly did, and *may* have attended to them all. We quote chiefly from the Pictorial Bible.

The person who presided (usually the head of the family, if one family kept the feast by itself—if others joined, a person chosen for the occasion from among those who thus united) taking in his hand a cup of wine, pronounced the usual grace, after which each person drank a cup of wine and water. After this, the persons present washed their hands ; and then the paschal supper was placed on the table. This consisted of the lamb, the unleavened bread, the bitter herbs or salad and a

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

dish not prescribed in the law of Moses, consisting of a thick sauce, made by mixing certain sweet and bitter things together—such as dates, figs, raisins, vinegar, and other ingredients, and which is said to have been intended as a memorial of the clay in which the Hebrews worked in Egypt. The unleavened bread consisted of two or three thin cakes.

All things being prepared, the person acting as head of the family took some of the salad of bitter herbs, and, after thanking God for having created the fruits of the ground, dipped it into the sauce, or, as some say, into wine or vinegar, and ate a small quantity, the rest of the company imitating his example. An explanation was then given, (usually after being asked for by some one present,) stating what the feast was designed to commemorate; after which the company sung [chanted] the 113th and 114th psalms. Then a second cup of wine was taken. The hands were then again washed; after which the master took two of the cakes of unleavened bread, and broke one of them, laying the broken parts upon the whole one; he then offered thanks for bringing bread out of the earth. Here the thanks followed, not preceded, the breaking of bread, for which the reason was alleged, that this was the bread of poverty and affliction. The master (imitated by the others) then took some of the bitter herbs and of the broken cake, and dipping them in the sauce, gave thanks, saying, "Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, King everlasting, who hast sanctified us by thy commandments, and hast commanded us to eat unleavened bread." Each person

JOHN xiii. 2-30.

2 And supper being ended, (the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him,)

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

then ate what he had taken. After other suitable thanks the paschal lamb was eaten, and thanks were again offered. Another cup of wine was then taken; this was called "the cup of blessing," (see 1 Cor. x. 16,) because the final blessing, or, as we should say, "grace after meat," was pronounced over it, as concluding the meal. A fourth cup was added, and this was called the cup of *hallel*, (or *hallelujah*,) because over it was sung the 115th, 116th, 117th, and 118th psalms. Another blessing was then pronounced, and with it the feast of the passover ended.

Take this, &c.] This Jesus said, it is presumed, after he had himself drank of the wine. *I will not drink, &c.*] I will not any more drink of the fruit of the vine, on such an occasion. *Until the kingdom of God shall come*] Meaning, we presume, as before, until we are come to the kingdom of God, or heaven.

JOHN xiii. 2-30.

Verses 2-5. *Supper being ended*] Rather, supper being *come*, or *during* supper:—the original is sometimes thus rendered, as in Mark vi. 2, where the same word is properly translated "was come." Verses 2, 4, and 12 are thus shown to agree. *The devil having put, &c.*] This remark is apparently thrown in merely to account for the subsequent conduct of Judas. *Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his*

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that he poureth water into a basin, and began

hands] Had given "all things" pertaining to man's salvation into his hands, so that in him, as Mediator, was vested all power in heaven and in earth. As John's object seems to be to draw notice to the humility and condescension of Christ in stooping to the performance of the act which is narrated immediately afterward, the sense seems to require that this passage should read, "*Though* Jesus knew that all things," &c., *yet* "he riseth," &c. This touching incident is given only by John. *He riseth from supper*] This was, probably, after having drank of the second cup of wine, and consequently after the company had eaten of the bitter herbs, but before the unleavened bread was broken. At this part of the ceremony it is said to have been customary to wash. *Laid aside his garments*] That is, his outer garment—his cloak or mantle—and probably his girdle. *Girded himself*] Namely, with the towel. "This," says the Pictorial Bible, "is not an existing custom of the East; but we know from the classical writers that the servant whose duty it was to attend to the washings of his master, or his master's guests, girded himself with a long piece of linen cloth, the end or ends of which being left hanging loose, supplied the towel with which the hands were wiped after being washed. Indeed, the towel around the waist was a proper and essential part of the equipment of the servant who discharged this office." *Began to wash the disciples' feet*] This formed no part of the usual passover observances, in which the hands only were washed. Our Lord, therefore, inculcated humility upon his apostles by a sponta-

to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

neous example, offered in his discharge of an office so servile and reverential in its nature that it was never performed by superiors to inferiors, and rarely by equals to each other. The washing, in this instance, was in all likelihood performed while the disciples were reclined at table; for as in this position they lay stretched out at almost full length, and the table was set out some distance from the wall, the Saviour could easily pass behind them, and, gently raising the foot, insert under it the basin of water, and after laving and rubbing it, dry it with the towel which was fastened round his waist.

Many commentators think that because Luke, after speaking of the institution of the Lord's supper, states that there was, or had been, some strife among the apostles as to who should possess the stations of highest dignity in the kingdom which they still supposed Jesus would establish, our Lord took this means to reprove their ambitious desires, teaching them by this symbolic act that true greatness was only to be found in the way of humility. Whether any such reproof was designed or not, it certainly does appear that one object Christ had in view was to instruct them in the duties of meekness and love, "for," says he, (verse 15,) "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." But while this is readily granted, we cannot but believe that he acted in this significant manner with the additional purpose of shadowing forth that spiritual washing whereby his people are delivered from the pollution of sin, and brought into intimate fellowship with himself. His reply to Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

part with me," (verse 8,) seems to establish this view beyond all successful contradiction.

Verses 6, 7. *Then cometh he to Simon Peter*] Meaning, *when* he came to Peter. Whether or not Jesus had already washed the feet of some of the others, does not appear. *Peter saith, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?*] This question, uttered, as it doubtless was, in a tone of wonder, strongly exhibits the reverence with which Peter regarded his Master; and his repugnance at allowing one so honoured and beloved to stoop so low as to wash *his* feet. Much as he had seen of Christ's condescension, he had never yet witnessed any thing equal to this. *Jesus answered, What I do thou knowest not now*] That is, the *meaning* of this washing thou knowest not. *But shall know hereafter*] Probably spoken, in part at least, of the explanation which he intended to give when he had concluded. (See verses 12-17.) It is, however, probable that neither Peter nor the others understood the full import of the transaction until after the glorification of Jesus, when they were taught it by the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit.

Verses 8, 9. *Peter saith, Thou shalt never wash my feet*] In this the affectionate, but inconsiderate disciple, doubtless spoke rashly. He ought to have been satisfied with the declaration his Master had just made, that there was a significance in the rite he did not, as yet,

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my hands and my head*.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not, save to wash *his feet*, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

perceive, and have suffered Jesus to wash his feet. *Jesus answered, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me*] That is, thou canst have no connection, no fellowship with me; thou canst not be my friend and disciple. This is not, we think, to be understood as designed to convey any intimation of removal from the apostleship, but that, unless Peter underwent that spiritual cleansing of which this washing was typical, he could not finally partake with Jesus in the communion of heavenly joys. On hearing Christ's reply, (though probably without understanding its *full* import,) Peter exclaimed, *Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and head*—that is, *wash not my feet only*, if this will increase my communion with thee, but also my hands and my head—thus clearly evincing how earnestly he desired to be a true disciple of his Lord.

Verse 10. *Jesus saith—He that is washed*] Rather, he who hath *bathed*—that is, washed the whole body in a bath. It was customary among the Jews thus to wash the whole person before engaging in their solemn feasts, and the disciples had doubtless attended to this ablution. *Needeth not save to wash his feet*] Need only wash his feet, which, as the Jews wore no stockings, might easily become soiled by the dust in walking from the bath to the house in which the entertainment was held. *Clean every whit*] The whole person is then clean. *Ye are clean, but not all*] That is, ye are not all clean. Jesus probably meant by this, that with one exception, Judas,

11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So, after he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

(see verse 11,) they were "clean," or free from criminal intention—their hearts were in a right state. The remark may have been intended both to impress their minds with a deep sense of his omniscience, as being able to penetrate into the heart of his betrayer and bring to light his evil designs, and to arouse, if possible, the conscience of Judas to a sense of his guilt.

Verses 12–17. *Know ye what I have done*] Meaning, Do you know its *intent*? He was certain they did not, but seems to have put the question as an introduction to the explanation which follows: as though he had said, I would have you know. *Ye call me Master and Lord*] Dr. Campbell renders, "*the* Teacher and *the* Master;" and contends that these terms are, by the original, applied to Jesus in a sense *peculiar to himself*. It was customary with the disciples of all the great rabbies to address their instructors, not by their proper name, but by their official designation—*teacher* or *master*, and in this respect the disciples of Jesus followed ordinary usage. *Ye say well—I am*] Then they were under obligation to receive his instructions and obey his commands; and it seems to be with the intent of impressing their minds with this truth that the remark is made. *Ye ought to wash one another's feet*] "These words," says Bloomfield, "are not to be taken in their literal sense: and

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord ; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

that the apostles *did not* so take them is clear, for neither they nor the primitive Christians had any such custom. Washing of feet (as one of the most servile employments) is put for the performance of the most lowly offices." Some, however, have thought that our Lord meant to enjoin the washing of each other's feet as a religious ordinance, to be perpetually observed among his followers : but that he did not wish to be so understood is clear from the fact that in no part of the New Testament, where we frequently meet with notices of the celebration of baptism and of the Lord's supper, is any mention made of the washing of feet as a religious ordinance. This shows that our Lord meant here to inculcate, not the doing of the very same thing, so much as that they should act toward each other with the same mind and spirit as influenced him ; that they should cultivate a kind, humble, condescending disposition, and perform readily and cheerfully every office of charity and good will for each other. "Let this mind be in you," says an apostle, speaking of this very grace, "which was also in Christ Jesus : " and again, "in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves : " and again, "Be kindly affectioned one to another." Phil. ii. 3, 5 ; Rom. xii. 10. *The servant is not greater than his lord*] And therefore what is not beneath the latter should not be considered disparaging to the former. The example of Christ is here again referred to as a motive to acts of self-denial and humble love ; and surely

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

18 I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen: but, that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

it should be a sufficient one to lead to the most hearty imitation. *If ye know these things*] If ye understand their import. *Happy are ye if ye do them*] That is, doing them, ye shall be happy. The mere perception, or even belief, of religious truth, will never, of itself, confer happiness. It is the *knowing* and *doing* the will of God, through faith in Christ, that secures felicity here and hereafter. And the more heartily we engage in the service of God, the more enjoyment shall we have in that service.

Verse 18. *I speak not of you all*] Spoken, perhaps, in reference to the above precept, and importing that he did not mean to affirm that *all* of them would be happy in its observance. Dr. A. Clarke thinks these words connect with the close of verse 10, and that verses 11-17 are parenthetical. We prefer the former view. *I know whom I have chosen*] Intimating that he knew the real character of Judas, and therefore did not expect that *he* would observe the preceding injunction; yet that notwithstanding his perfect knowledge of that disciple's naturally evil disposition, and of the awful crime he would commit, he had not hesitated to call him to the apostleship. We must, however, suppose that Judas was, at the time of his becoming an apostle, a sincere, devoted follower of Christ, and a good man, or Jesus would most assuredly not have employed him; and that he had fallen from that state of grace through unwatchfulness, and yielding to his besetting sins. *That the scripture may be fulfilled, &c.*] That is, *thus shall the*

19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*.

scripture, "He that eateth bread with me," &c., be fulfilled. The passage referred to is Psalm xli. 9, and is by many supposed to have been originally spoken of those intimates of David's who united in rebellion against him, but we know of no evidence which will prove this. Commentators are not agreed as to the passage having reference to the treachery of Judas:—some, embracing the view that it was originally spoken of Ahithophel, think that our Lord quotes it merely in an accommodated sense, the treachery and ingratitude of the one case furnishing a striking illustration of that of the other; others, with perhaps better reason, believe it to be a prediction of the betrayal of Christ, and that in the act of Judas it received its sole and complete accomplishment. *He that eateth bread with me*, &c.] This expression denotes a *familiar friend*; the communion of domestic hospitality having been always accounted a sign of the most attached and ardent friendship. This consideration greatly heightens the offence of Judas. He betrayed *his friend* and *benefactor*: he was both ungrateful and treacherous. *Hath lifted up his heel against me*] That is, has turned against me to overthrow me. The metaphor, observes Bloomfield, seems to be taken from the conduct of *kicking animals*, which suddenly, and, as it were, treacherously, kick at and injure their feeders.

Verse 19. *I tell you before—that ye may believe I am he*] That I am he whom I profess to be, the Messiah. The words, "that—ye may believe I am he," are not to be understood as implying that they now doubted this

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, That one of you shall betray me.

fact, but simply that when they saw this prediction accomplished in his death, they might be the more confirmed in the belief that Jesus was "the Christ." Doubtless the crucifixion of our Lord was a sore trial to the apostles, and might have led to their rejection of him, had it not been for the influence which this and similar foretellings had upon their minds.

Verse 20. The connection of this verse with the preceding is not very obvious. Perhaps Jesus spoke more at length, reminding the disciples of the greatness and blessedness of their office, and assuring them that notwithstanding the sorrows through which he was to pass, and in which they were to participate to some extent, they would find friends who would give them a welcome reception, and that those who should receive them would be regarded as receiving him. Thus he mingled consolation with his predictions of trial, and kept constantly before their minds the thought that they were *the representatives of the Messiah*, and that as such they should not be troubled at having to suffer, as he had, from the treachery and perverseness of those whom they taught.

Verse 21. *He was troubled in spirit*] An expression descriptive of acute mental suffering. *Testified*] Openly and explicitly declared; not, as before, merely hinted. *One of you shall betray me*] Mark says, (xiv. 18,) "One of you *which eateth with me* shall betray me." This was the cause of his being "troubled in spirit." Critics

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.

generally refer this deep feeling to the sorrow Jesus felt at the treachery and hard-heartedness of Judas, on whose conscience it would seem that no appeals could have any effect, so fully was his heart set in him to do evil. It is not impossible, however, that a sense of his own approaching suffering, as well as of Judas's guilt, may have contributed to our Lord's disquietude.

Verse 22. *Then the disciples looked one on another*] Looked at, or toward each other, with the utmost *anxiety*. Such is said by Bloomfield to be the force of the original. *Doubting of whom he spake*] Being altogether at a loss to know whom he meant. Judas must, of course, have been an exception: his own conscience would accuse him, saying, "*Thou art the man.*" But as he does not seem to have been suspected, it is fairly presumable that his outward conduct must have been correct, and his pilferings, &c., (see John xii. 6,) unsuspected. Luke says, (xxii. 23,) that on hearing Christ's declaration, the apostles "began to inquire among themselves which of them it was that should do this thing:"—meaning, we presume, asked one of another to whom Jesus alluded: but not being able to satisfy themselves, and being, as Matthew tells us, "exceeding sorrowful," they, according to the latter evangelist, "began every one of them to say unto Jesus, Lord, is it I?" Matt. xxvi. 22. It would seem—for Mark says, they inquired "one by one"—that even Judas feigned sorrow. To the questions thus put, our Lord answered, according to Mark, (xiv. 20,) "It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish:" and according

to Matthew, (xxvi. 23,) "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me." From this it is probable that Judas occupied a place so near to Jesus that he could readily help himself from the same vessel, and it is well known that it has ever been customary in the East for a number to eat out of the same dish, dipping their hands into the food, and conveying it with their fingers to their mouth, neither knives, forks, nor spoons being used by the Orientals. Nor is delicacy so much violated by this habit as would at first sight appear, because of their frequent ablutions; especially just before or after a meal. Jackson, in his Account of Morocco, describing the customs of the Moors and Arabians in that country, says, "Half-a-dozen persons sit round a bowl, into which each person puts (that is, dips) his hand, and, taking up the food, throws it, by a dexterous jerk, into his mouth, without suffering his fingers to touch the lips. However repugnant this may be to our ideas of cleanliness, yet the hand being always washed, and never touching the mouth in the act of eating, these people are by no means so dirty as Europeans have sometimes hastily imagined."

Mark (xiv. 21) then represents our Lord as adding, "The Son of man indeed goeth as it is written of him; but wo to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! Good were it for that man if he had never been born." With this declaration Matthew and Luke (Matt. xxvi. 24; Luke xxii. 22) substantially agree. By the clause, "the Son of man indeed *goeth*," is meant, *goeth unto death*; and the present tense is used because of the near approach of the time of his departure. The *manner* and *nature* of Christ's death had been clearly revealed in the writings of the prophets; especially by Isaiah: hence it is here said, "he goeth *as it is written*"

23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

of him;" (Luke says, as "it was determined;")—so "determined," because God foresaw what would be the conduct of his betrayer and persecutors; but this determination did not affect their acts. "Judas was not a traitor because God foresaw it; but God foresaw it, because Judas *would be so*."—*Chrysostom*. The "wo" which should come upon him, and the declaration that it had been "good," or *better*, for him "not to have been born," prove his treachery to have been *voluntary*, for otherwise it could not be justly punishable. Mr. Watson thinks that "this passage is conclusive against Judas's repentance and forgiveness in this life, and equally cogent to prove the doctrine of the eternity of future punishment: for if all lapsed intelligences are to be restored to happiness, then Judas must be among the number; and if so, since, however long the punishment may be, it is but temporary, and the ultimate felicity eternal, it could not be said that it had been better for him not to have existed."

Verses 23-25. *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom, &c.*] That is, reclining next to him at his right hand, so that his head lay *toward* the bosom of Christ. The text does not mean that he was actually *resting his head* on our Lord's breast. *One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved*] Meaning, for whom he entertained a stronger love than he did for the others: or with whom he was more intimate. It is commonly supposed that reference is had to John, the author of this Gospel. *Peter beckoned to him that he should ask, &c.*] "Beck-

25 He then, lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, *the son of Simon.*

27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

oned," here, means, made signs to him to inquire who was meant. *He then, lying on Jesus' breast*] The word rendered "lying," here, is different from that above translated *leaning*; and intimates that this disciple did now so alter his position as to rest his head, in a respectful, affectionate manner, on the breast of his Master; doubtless that he might put the question he was about to ask more privately than he otherwise could have done, for it would seem that he wished to avoid, as much as possible, being heard.

Verses 26, 27. *Jesus answered*] Probably in the same private manner. *He it is to whom I shall give a sop*] Campbell translates (as in the margin) *morsel*. *When I have dipped it*] Dipped it in the sauce. It is the opinion of some expositors that our Lord was now engaged, as head of the apostolic family, in helping his disciples to their portions of the supper; and that immediately on answering John's question he handed a *bit* (to use the term which Bloomfield thinks best expresses the import of the word rendered "sop") to Judas, thus pointing him out as the traitor. *After the sop, &c.*] As Satan is before said to "have entered into" Judas, (see verse 2,) this entrance is either to be understood of his confirming Judas in the resolution he had already formed and acted on, or, that he now incited him to a speedy accomplishment of his purpose. The unhappy man

28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

29 For some *of them* thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

probably feared himself suspected, and was urged on by feelings of anger or dread of exposure. According to Matthew, (xxvi. 25,) Judas about this time inquired of Christ—probably in an under tone—"Master, is it I?"—that is, is it I who shall betray thee? To which Jesus replied, (we may suppose in like manner,) "Thou hast said;" meaning, *It is thou*. In explanation of Judas's asking this question, it is supposed by some, that, reclining near Christ, he either overheard the question of John and the reply of Jesus, or else, with the suspicion natural to conscious guilt, he conceived them to be speaking of *him*. *Then said Jesus to Judas*] In all likelihood in his usual tone, so that he could be heard by all the disciples. *That thou doest, &c.*] That is, what thou art about to do. Judas doubtless understood the import of this, though none of the others did. This is not to be regarded as advisory, much less as a command; but as if Jesus had said, Since thou art determined to deliver me up to my enemies, why dost thou delay?

Verses 28, 29. *No man knew, &c.*] That is, no one but Judas himself. *Thought Jesus had said*] Supposed he had. *The bag*] Meaning, the *purse*: he seems to have had charge of the money contributed for their support, or for distribution among the poor. *Buy those things that we have need of*] As there was neither buying nor selling in Jerusalem during the time of cele-

30 He then, having received the sop, went immediately out; and it was night.

brating the paschal supper, and the disciples knew this, it follows that Jesus did not eat of the passover at the same time as the majority of the Jews. The "feast" to which reference is here made was that of unleavened bread. *Give something to the poor*] "It is well known that our Lord and his disciples lived on public charity; and yet they gave alms out of what they had thus received. From this we learn that even those who live on charity themselves are expected to divide a little with those who are in deeper distress and want."—*Clarke*.

Verse 30. *He*] Judas. *Went immediately out*] He went to the chief priests, and made with them the final arrangements for the apprehension of Jesus. He must therefore have already known, or, at least, had strong reasons to suspect, our Lord's intention of repairing, after supper, to the garden of Gethsemane. *And it was night*] "These words suggest some solemn and touching thoughts. Of all the nights which have closed in upon this sinful world, this was accompanied by events of the most extraordinary and awful character. It was the night in which 'the Prince of life'—God manifest in the flesh—was betrayed into the hands of his enemies; the night in which the great and good 'Shepherd' was smitten, and the sheep scattered; a night of sorrow and severe trial to the disciples generally. But their 'night' was as day, their sorrow as joy, compared with that 'horror of great darkness'—that eternal 'night'—which now gathered thickly around the unhappy Judas, never again to be dissipated by the beamings of the 'Day-spring from on high.' O ye followers of an illustrious

LESSON XIV.

[A. D. 29.

Christ again informs his disciples of his approaching death, and exhorts them to cultivate love one to another—He predicts Peter's denial of him—Institutes the sacrament of the Lord's supper.—Matthew xxvi. 26-29; Mark xiv. 22-25; Luke xxii. 19, 20, 28-38; John xiii. 31-38.

JOHN xiii. 31-38.

THEREFORE, when he was gone out, Jesus said, now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

Master, think of this night; let your souls tremble at the contemplation of its shades; and while you mourn over the bitterness of His cup of sorrows—while your souls bleed at the remembrance of His anguish—gratefully acknowledge that he entered into the gloom of his cross and passion, that your *night* might be turned into *day*; that you might be snatched from the region and shadow of death, to be put in possession of an inheritance of which there is this glorious record of everlasting sunshine—“There shall be no *night* there!”

NOTES ON JOHN xiii. 31-38.

On the departure of Judas, our Lord delivered to his disciples those most interesting *last discourses* recorded, with some very slight exceptions, only by St. John, and which, beginning with the thirty-first verse of the thirteenth chapter, are continued to the close of the sixteenth. Christ's object in giving them seems to have been to fix in the minds of the apostles truths which, comparatively ignorant of spiritual things as they still

32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you.

were, and now labouring under heavy affliction, they could not, indeed, at that time fully comprehend, but which they would afterward understand; and by which, even now, they would be somewhat fortified against their impending trials. *Now is the Son of man glorified*] Meaning, is about to be "glorified." The treachery of Judas was to introduce that grand moral drama in which Jesus, after expiating the sins of the world by the sacrifice of himself, and conquering death by bursting his own bands, would ascend triumphantly into heaven, and there, in his glorified humanity, appear as our regal Mediator before the eternal Throne. "Glorified" means *exalted, honoured*. *God is glorified in him*] The divine benevolence has been rendered most conspicuous by the gift of Jesus Christ: and by that act immense ascriptions of praise brought to God. "In him" is by Campbell rendered "by him."

Verse 32. *If God be glorified in him*] Rather, *Since, or inasmuch as*, God will be glorified by him:—the perfections of the divine character are illustriously exhibited by the work of redemption wrought out by Christ. *God shall glorify him in himself*] Wesley and others render *with* himself. This is doubtless spoken of the honour which should be put on Christ Jesus, when he should be exalted to heaven, *in our nature*, there to appear "in the presence of God for us."

Verse 33. *Little children*] Rather, *beloved* children:—an appellation expressive of the most tender affection. The term was frequently employed by superiors in addressing inferiors, and especially by teachers to their

Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love

pupils; in justification of which custom Maimonides advances the following reason:—"The father, indeed, makes a man partaker of this temporal life; but the preceptor, who teaches him wisdom, introduces him to the future life."—*Bloomfield*. *A little while I am with you*] Meaning, that he would continue with them *but* a short time. Our Lord speaks as one who, sensible he is about to die, takes farewell of his friends, and delivers to them his last requests. *Ye shall seek me*] Will earnestly desire to be with me—will long after my presence and converse. *As I said to the Jews, &c.*] Namely, at one of the celebrations of the feast of tabernacles. John vii. 34; viii. 21. *So now I say to you*] I say the same to you—whither I go ye cannot come. The Saviour only meant, however, that they could not *now* go whither he went, though they should hereafter. See verse 36; xiv. 2, 3.

Verse 34. *A new commandment I give unto you*] Not new, in the sense of having never before been enjoined, for the Mosaic law contains a strong injunction to the love of our neighbour; (Lev. xix. 18;) but *new* in the sense of its being the *distinguishing* characteristic of the gospel: the sum and substance of which is, love to God and man. *Love one another*] Christians are to be distinguished from other men, not so much by outward appearance, as by tender and constant attachment to each other, prompting to kindness of thought and act. In the language of Mr. Barnes, "This was to surmount all distinctions of country, of colour, of rank, of office, of sect. They were to befriend each other in

one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

35 By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest

trials, be careful of each other's feelings and reputation, deny themselves to promote each other's welfare." See this command referred to, or enforced, in Gal. vi. 1, 2; 1 Thess. iv. 9; 1 John iii. 23. *As I have loved you, &c.*] Here is specified the nature and measure of Christ's love. Christ had fervently and constantly loved them, and was now about to lay down his life for their and our salvation: so ought we to love the souls of our fellows as even to be willing to give up our lives, if thereby we may secure their eternal safety. *By this shall all men know, &c.*] This mutual love should so pervade all their conduct toward each other, that it might become, as it were, the *badge* of their profession, and they be as readily known by its exercise as men of any particular sect or club are by the distinguishing marks of their order. And this beautiful trait of character did so eminently distinguish the early Christians, that, according to Tertullian, the heathen around were struck by it, and could not forbear remarking on it. "See," said they, "how they love one another, and how they are ready to lay down their lives for each other!" Would that Christians of the present day bore a stronger resemblance to their predecessors, in this particular, than they do!

Verses 36-38.* *Simon Peter said, Lord, whither goest thou?*] This inquiry was evidently called forth by

* Mr. Townsend introduces Luke xxii. 28-38 before John xiii 36-38; but the compiler prefers to place it after, so as not to break the connection existing in John's narrative.

thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterward.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

the remark of Christ recorded in the thirty-third verse. That remark, however, does not seem to have been comprehended; for Peter apparently understood him of departing, in consequence of opposition, to some other part, whereas he spoke of his death, and subsequent ascension into heaven. *Jesus answered, Thou canst not follow me now, &c.*] Why not? Probably because he was not yet really possessed of that moral strength which would have enabled him, for the sake of Christ, to endure the pains of death, and that his work was not yet ended. *Shalt afterward*] Some commentators think there is here a covert allusion to the *manner* of Peter's death, as well as a more direct assertion that he should subsequently be with Christ. *Peter said, I will lay down my life, &c.*] This declaration shows the ardour of Peter's affection for his Lord, and his unwillingness to be separated from him; as the *result* does the weakness of human nature, when unassisted by the grace of God. His present boasting forms a strong contrast to his after weakness, and should, says Dr. Adam Clarke, "be an eternal warning to all self-confident persons: though there be sincerity and good-will at the bottom, yet in the trial these cannot perform that office which belongs to the power of God. We should will, and then look to God for power to execute: without him we can do nothing." *The cock shall not crow, &c.*] See on Matt. xxvi. 34, pp. 338, 339.

LUKE xxii. 28-38.

28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations:

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift you as wheat:

LUKE xxii. 28-38.

Verses 28-30. *Ye—have continued with me in my temptations*] Meaning, during his trials and afflictions. Heb. iv. 15. For their faithfulness in thus adhering to him he promises them a glorious reward in the future world. *I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me*] “A more exact translation,” says Ripley, “would be, ‘And, as my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom, I appoint unto you that ye shall eat and drink,’ &c.” They would be exalted, not only to a state of happiness, but to honour and rule in that state, and privileged with intimate communion with their glorified Master.

Verses 31, 32. *The Lord said, Simon, Simon, &c.*] Although Jesus addresses himself here expressly to Peter, his words have reference also to the other apostles present. It is suggested, as a reason for Christ’s speaking particularly to Simon, that he had been using too confident expressions; this may be, or it may be accounted for by supposing that he perceived Peter to be in more imminent danger than were the others. *Satan hath desired to have you*] “The meaning of this declaration is, not that Satan had *merely desired to have*, but that he had actually got possession of the apostles; they had been given up to

32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not : and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

his desire, to be "sifted as wheat." *That he may sift you as wheat*] The object of "sifting," or *winnowing* wheat, being to separate the grain from the chaff, this surrendering of the apostles to Satan for such a purpose was designed for the trial of their faith and constancy. A similar metaphor occurs Amos ix. 9 : "I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, as corn is sifted in a sieve." The language denotes that sharp conflicts and severe trials of mind awaited them : and surely the disciples could scarcely have met with a greater shock to their faith in Jesus, as to his being the Messiah, than his arrest and crucifixion. *But I have prayed that thy faith fail not*] By "fail not," here, is meant that it should not *utterly fail*—that he should not *apostatize*. That Peter fell into sin—into gross and flagrant sin—there can be no question : and it is not unlikely, that had it not been for the prayer of Christ, he would have been as effectually separated from him as was Judas. *When thou art converted*] Rather, *when thou hast returned*, namely, from thy fall.—*Holden*. When thou hast humbled thyself, and turned to God with a penitent heart. The confession and deploring of sin is in Scripture frequently spoken of as a "turning" or "returning" to God. *Strengthen thy brethren*] Confirm them, warn them, encourage them. This, however, does not imply that he should possess any superiority over them. The experience of God's mercy and forgiveness which Peter would then have become possessed of, would admirably fit him for the task of counselling others. Our Saviour seems here "to intimate that, after this fall, Peter would

33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, The cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among

become more cautious and circumspect, and uncommonly strong in faith."—*A. Clarke.*

Verses 33, 34. See on Matt. xxvi. 34, pp. 338, 339.

Verses 35, 36. *When I sent you without purse, &c.]* Referring to the time when he sent them out to preach. See Matt. x. *Lacked ye any thing?* Did you suffer for the necessities of life, notwithstanding you provided yourselves neither with money nor provision? *But now, &c.]* Intimating that in their future attempts to propagate the gospel they would be placed in very different circumstances, and that it would be incumbent on them to make all convenient suitable provision for their subsistence. *He that hath no sword—let him buy one]* This is, in all probability, a figurative expression, denoting that they would be placed in circumstances of great peril; and that it behooved them to be prepared for them, just as a man exposed to the attacks of murderous enemies would seek a weapon of defence.

Verses 37, 38. *This that is written must be accomplished]* Must be fulfilled. The quotation is made from

the transgressors : for the things concerning me have an end.

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

Isaiah liii. 12. *He was reckoned among the transgressors*] He was accounted and treated as one, though in reality "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." Heb. vii. 26. This prophecy is quoted, apparently, as a reason for the declaration above made, that the apostles would be exposed to severe trials and imminent perils:—chiefly, because of their insisting on faith in one who was put to death as a malefactor; and that there was salvation in none other. *The things concerning me have an end*] The "things foretold concerning me"—that is, referring to my death—will be speedily accomplished. The time of trial is therefore to be understood as *at hand*. *Behold, here are two swords*] So they must have construed his words literally. How it happened that they had the swords, and for what purpose, is not positively known. The opinion most generally entertained is, that as travelling was at this time very insecure, on account of the great number of robbers who infested the country, the people were accustomed to arm themselves when on journeys, especially when repairing to Jerusalem on occasions of the great festivals. Schoettgen has shown that at that time even the priests went armed when on a journey.—*Bloomfield*. *It is enough*] Designed, probably, as an intimation that they had misapprehended his meaning, but it was a matter of no great consequence—he would not take time then to explain.

MATT. xxvi. 26-29.

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

MATT. xxvi. 26-29.

Verse 26. *As they were eating, Jesus took bread*] This was probably toward the *end* of the passover supper, when the paschal lamb had been eaten. The "bread" referred to was doubtless a part of the unleavened cakes which had been provided for the passover: hence some think that the use of *unleavened* bread is essential to the proper celebration of the sacrament. As no particular kind of bread is enjoined, it is probably a matter of no importance. *Blessed it*] The word "*it*" is improperly supplied by our translators: he blessed God, namely, for its bestowment. Luke and Paul say, (Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24,) he "gave thanks." *And brake it*] This he did as head of the family. The "bread" being baked in thin cakes was easily broken. *Take, eat; this is my body*] That is, *signifies* or *represents* my body. This is a frequent form of speech in all languages, and is often met with in Scripture. Thus, in Genesis xl. 12, we read, "The three branches *are three days*;" Dan. vii. 24, "The ten horns *are ten kings*;" Matt. xiii. 38, "The field *is the world*;" Rev. i. 20, "The seven candlesticks *are the seven churches*." The dogma of *transubstantiation*, or the notion that the body of our Lord had become actually changed into this bread, and that in all succeeding sacraments the elements are changed into the real body and blood of Christ, is most contrary to reason and all the laws of fair interpretation: and that of *consub-*

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it:

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

stantiation, or the real presence and intimate union of the flesh and blood of our Lord *with* the bread and wine of the sacrament, is well nigh, if not altogether, as revolting as the doctrine of transubstantiation. Luke represents our Saviour as adding to the declaration "this is my body," the words, "which is *given* (equivalent to Paul's expression '*broken*') for you: this do in remembrance of me;" (Luke xxii. 19;) that is, in "remembrance" of his death. The Lord's supper is therefore chiefly designed to be a commemorative rite, leading his followers to "keep in mind his precious death until his coming again."

Verse 27. *He took the cup*] Meaning, the "cup" containing the wine. This was, according to Luke, (with whom Paul substantially agrees,) "after supper." Luke xxii. 20; 1 Cor. xi. 25. Whether or not this was what was termed the "cup of blessing," with which the passover supper, properly so called, was concluded, does not appear. *Drink ye all of it*] That is, All of you drink of it. It is plain from Christ's injunction that the communion is to be given in both kinds to all believers; yet the Romish Church deny the wine to the laity. Mark tells us (xiv. 23) that "they all drank of it."

Verse 28. *This is my blood of the new testament*] Meaning, "this *represents* my blood," as the bread did his body. Luke (xxii. 20) says, "This cup is the new testament in my blood." So, also, Paul. The word *diatheke*, rendered "testament," ought, it is said, to have been translated *covenant*: of which his "blood," thus

symbolized, was the ratification. Allusion is probably here had to the covenant which God made with the Israelites at Sinai, which covenant was confirmed or ratified by sprinkling the blood of the sacrifices, offered on the occasion, on the contracting parties;—partly on the altar (as the representative of Jehovah) and partly on the people, saying, “Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you.” *Exod. xxiv. 6-8.* As this covenant was designed to be but temporary, and was now abrogated, another and better one being introduced, the latter is termed the *new covenant*, in contradistinction to the former. This latter may also be designated *the new covenant* in reference to the prediction of Jeremiah, (*xxxi. 31.*) “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” “This dispensation has the nature of a covenant,” says Mr. Watson, “because it contains ‘the great and precious promises’ on the part of God, the forgiveness of sins, the renewal of the heart in holiness, and the all-comprehensive engagement, ‘I will be their God and they shall be my people;’ an engagement which includes not only all blessings which pertain to ‘life and godliness’ here, but, as we learn from our Lord’s discourse with the Sadducees, (see note on *Matthew xxii. 31, 32,* pages 101, 102,) the resurrection of the body and the felicities of an endless future life. All this is promised by God: and on the part of man are required ‘repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,’ by the merit of whose death alone we can claim these blessings, and in respect to which, as a satisfaction to divine justice, God binds himself to bestow them. This covenant the pouring forth of the

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

blood of Christ as a sacrificial victim at once procured and ratified; so that it stands firm to all truly penitent persons who believe in him; and of this great truth the Lord's supper is the instituted sign and seal." *Which is shed*] That is, "is about to be shed." *For many*] For all mankind, according to the undoubted use of the word "many" in Rom. v. 15. It is not, then, as was the old, a partial and limited covenant, but embraces within its ample provisions the whole family of man. *For the remission of sins*] For the forgiveness of sins.

Verse 29. *I will not drink henceforth, &c.*] See on Luke xxii. 16 and 18, pp. 232, 233. It is not at all likely that our Lord either ate or drank of the newly-ordained institution: indeed, it would seem that he could not, with any propriety:—1st. Because it was emblematical and figurative of the breaking of his own body and shedding of his own blood; 2d. Because he was the Mediator as well as procurer of this new covenant, and therefore not one of the contracting parties.

LESSON XV.

[A. D. 29.]

Continuation of the conversation at the passover—The company prepare to leave the room.

JOHN xiv.

LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

NOTES ON JOHN xiv.

Verse 1. *Let not your heart be troubled*] This remark seems to have been called forth by the sorrow which the disciples manifested on hearing that Jesus was about to be betrayed into the hands of his enemies. Matt. xxvi. 21, 22. But, although "exceeding sorrowful" at that intelligence, it is not likely that they had very clear conceptions of the nature or extent of the trial to which he or they were to be subjected; but that an ill-defined sense of some impending calamity to their beloved Master, and possibly to themselves, oppressed their hearts. Jesus, however, with characteristic kindness, endeavoured to cheer them. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me*] This passage may be rendered, "Believe in God, believe also in me;" and many of the most eminent commentators are of opinion that it should be so translated. The Saviour is not to be understood as intimating that the apostles did not already believe both in himself and God; but his language is to be taken as an exhortation to increased confidence in the divine mercy and faithfulness, as the most effectual means of alleviating their "sorrow." The surest remedy for trouble is heartfelt trust in the goodness and power of the Almighty.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were not so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Verse 2. *In my Father's house*] Meaning, probably, in heaven; which in the Scriptures is described as being peculiarly the dwelling-place of the Divine Majesty, because he there "manifests his power, wisdom, benevolence, and justice, by works far more illustrious than are seen on earth." *Are many mansions*] Many places of abode—accommodations for many persons. This language, which is doubtless figurative, is intended to convey the idea that provision is made in the upper "and better world" for the comfort and happiness of all God's people: and though the exact character of that provision is not known, we may rest assured that it will be suited to the nature and capacities of the glorified inhabitants, and admirably calculated to demonstrate the wisdom and goodness of the great Supreme. *If it were not so, I would have told you*] Designed as a confirmation of the preceding assertion, and as an assurance that he did not deceive them. Bloomfield gives the sense thus—"Such a hope I should not hold out, unless I were prepared to realize it." It would appear from this passage that the disciples looked forward to a future state of felicity, and that Jesus, knowing this, had not discouraged the thought, but had rather sought to strengthen it. *I go to prepare a place for you*] To gain for you admittance to those heavenly mansions. This was to be effected by the atoning death and intercession of Christ. Heb. ix. 24; x. 19, 20. It may be thought that our Lord's statement here conflicts with the declaration elsewhere made, that heaven was prepared for the righteous from "the foundation of the world." There need, how-

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

ever, be no difficulty in this: for the latter text merely denotes that it was determined by God that the "believing" should be finally rewarded with the bliss of heaven, whereas the former speaks of the method by which Christ procured it for them. "Let us look through the mists of time to the sunshine of eternity—from the houses of clay to the mansions of our Father:"

"Beyond the bounds of time and space
Look forward to that heavenly place,
The saints' secure abode;
On faith's strong eagle-pinions rise,
And force our passage to the skies,
And scale the mount of God."

Verse 3. *If I go and prepare, &c.*] "Rather," says Holden, "*when I shall have gone and prepared.*" *I will come again and receive you*] Probably meaning, at the last day. See 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, which furnishes an excellent comment on this clause. *That where I am, &c.*] Where I shall then be. Much of the happiness of the glorified believer will consist in his intimate communion with Christ. The assurance that they should, after a short interval, again be with Christ, was well calculated to afford the disciples consolation under their temporary bereavement.

Verse 4. *Whither I go ye know*] He had just told them—to his Father's house: and therefore they might be presumed to have known. *The way ye know*] The course to be pursued in order to arrive at heaven he had

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my

often taught them;—that course was, faith in him, and obedience to his precepts. See, as an example, John vi. 29, 40, 54.

Verse 5. *Thomas said, We know not whither thou goest*] Or, art about to go. This he said because he did not comprehend what Christ meant by going to prepare a place in his "Father's house." It is suggested by some that Thomas thought his Master was about to retire to some foreign country to avoid his enemies, and perhaps to set up a temporal kingdom.

Verse 6. *Jesus saith, I am the way*] The way to the Father. As a road conducts to a particular place, so Christ is the guide and the medium of access to God. This is explicitly stated in the last clause of the verse. Jesus is also "the way," because he is the author of the plan of salvation. *The truth*] The source of truth—or he who originates and communicates truth for the salvation of man. *The life*] The giver of life. It is thought by some, however, that the passage is but a Hebraism for "I am the *true and living way*;" or again, "I am the *true way to life*." *No man cometh to the Father but by me*] By "coming to the Father" is probably meant, the obtaining of his grace here, and admittance to his blissful presence hereafter. No man can obtain these favours but by the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ. *Coming by him*, means, in his name, relying on his merits.

Verse 7. *If ye had known me, ye should have known the Father also*] Jesus does not mean by this that the

Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

apostles had no true knowledge of his character, but merely that they had not a *full* and *accurate* knowledge thereof: if they had, they would have acknowledged him to be God. His assertion implies the *most intimate union* with the Father—so that the knowledge of the one necessarily carries with it the knowledge of the other. *Henceforth ye know him, and have seen him*] The present tense is, in the opinion of some, here employed for the future: the sense being, that in a short time they should “know” the Father, and, as it were, “see” him, by the aid of the Holy Ghost. Not, perhaps, “see him” in any personal or bodily shape, but “see him”—that is, acquire a true knowledge of his attributes—of his character—by that revelation of them which should be given in the gospel, by the teachings of the Spirit of truth. To “know” Jesus, in the sense here intended, is, therefore, *confidently to believe him to be* infinite in wisdom, benevolence, power, &c.; and this belief would have necessarily led to “the knowledge of the Father,” for all who thus continue to believe on Christ will be favoured with the teachings of the Holy Spirit, testifying to them that “Christ and the Father are one.”

Verse 8. *Philip said, Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us*] This request was evidently called forth by the remark of Christ, recorded in the preceding verse, “from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him,”—meaning, *shall* “know” and “see him,” in the attainment of a clearer knowledge of his character as deve-

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Show us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak

veloped in his plans for the salvation of men. Philip, however, understanding his Master to speak, not of a *spiritual*, but *bodily* manifestation, eagerly asks for the sight, declaring that this would "suffice," or *satisfy their utmost wishes*. We have here an instance of the extreme difficulty of rightly comprehending spiritual things, unless the heart and mind be largely influenced by divine grace. The only reason why we understand these matters better than Philip did is, that those influences are more extensively bestowed now than they were then.

Verse 9. *Jesus said, Have I been so long with you*] Performing signs and wonders in your sight for nearly three years past. *And yet hast thou not known me?*] Hast thou not yet clearly perceived my true character—that I am truly God? *He that hath seen me, &c.*] That hath so "seen me"—or *considered* my character, as exhibited by my works—as to attain a correct perception of who and what I really am, *hath seen the Father*, for God is essentially one. The word rendered "seen," here, and in verse 7, signifies not merely the act of seeing a thing, but also the perceiving or knowing what *it is*—the *comprehending its nature*. *How sayest thou, &c.*] *Why* sayest thou, "show us the Father," seeing that thou mightest have "seen" the Father in me?

Verse 10. *Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me*] The fact of this indwelling of the "Father" in the person of Christ, Jesus had already

not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

made known; (see John x. 38;) and he here seems to upbraid Philip with lack of faith in not crediting his assertion, or, at least, with dulness of apprehension, in not clearly perceiving his meaning, and confidently relying on his veracity. To be "in the Father," and "the Father in him," denotes the most intimate conjunction—not such conjunction as is referred to in Romans viii. 1, and 2 Corinthians v. 17, where those are said to be *in* Christ who are united to him by faith and love, but, as the context shows, community of *work* and *power*, and, by inference, unity of *nature*. These words, therefore, contain a fuller explanation of the *nature* and *extent* of the union of "the Father" and "the Christ" than do the preceding. *The words that I speak, I speak not of myself*] Meaning, not of myself *merely*:—these instructions are no more *mine* than they are the *Father's*. This truth he had repeatedly advanced. Take, as example, John vii. 16, &c., and viii. 28. *The Father—he doeth the works*] By "works," here, Jesus does not intend solely the miracles he had performed, but also the instructions he had given. In short, the term includes all that he had done to promote the salvation of men. All this was the joint work of the Father and the Son.

Verse 11. *Believe me that I am in the Father, &c.*] That is, believe my *declaration* that I am in the Father. *Or else*] If you do not credit my testimony. *Believe me for the works' sake*] Receive the evidence they afford that what I say is true. This verse is probably to be

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

regarded as an earnest admonition to the disciples to repose confidence in his claims to divinity.

Verse 12. *He that believeth, the works that I do shall he do*] This promise is generally regarded, and no doubt correctly so, as applicable only to the apostles of our Lord; or at furthest, only to them and their fellow-labourers: for the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit have never been common in the church, and are now unknown. Works *similar* to those of Christ the disciples did actually perform: for we have indubitable testimony that they promulgated his doctrines, wrought miracles in proof of their being sent of God, won many over to the acknowledgment of the faith, and thus illustriously glorified the divine Being and promoted the salvation of men. *And greater works than these shall he do*] Not greater, in themselves considered; for our Lord's miracles were the most stupendous that were ever performed, and his instructions the most clear and convincing that were ever uttered; but "greater" in their *results*. The labours of Christ were confined to Palestine, those of the apostles are supposed to have extended over the whole known world; he preached but a part of the gospel; they, the perfected dispensation of "good-will to man;" hence, as during the personal ministry of Jesus the great sacrifice for sin was not offered, nor the efficient agency of the Holy Ghost given in that copious and general manner in which it was afterward imparted, his instruction was less available than was that of the apostles; and it was probably chiefly in view of the immense

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

number of persons whom they, instrumentally, should convert to the faith, that Jesus said they should perform "greater works" than he had accomplished by his preaching and miracles. *Because I go unto my Father*] How does this constitute a reason for their doing "greater works" than he? We presume, because by so doing he procured and dispensed, in the fullest and freest manner, the influences of the Holy Ghost, the efficient agent in the spiritual renovation of man. See xvi. 7-14. Grotius, Campbell, and some others, connect these words with the thirteenth verse, but Bloomfield, and a large number of other eminent critics, prefer the present arrangement.

Verses 13, 14. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, &c.*] That is, "whatsoever ye shall ask" for the furtherance of my cause. *I will do it*] In chap. xv. 16, and xvi. 23, our Lord says, "whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he will give it you;" whence it follows, that as both the Father and Christ hear and grant those petitions, both are possessed of equal authority and power. *That the Father may be glorified*] May be honoured, praised, served, by the extension of the gospel among men. *In the Son*] By and through the Son; meaning, by the grace which the Son would impart to these apostles, and the success which should attend their ministry. The more extensive the triumphs of the gospel should become, the more would the glory of God be manifest, and the divine attributes known, respected, honoured, and loved. *If ye shall ask any thing, &c.*] Meaning, as before, "any thing" necessary for the successful prosecution of their work. The pro-

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments :

nise is repeated, with the design, we presume, of rendering it the more impressive, and of exciting in the hearts of the apostles the strongest assurance of faithfulness on the part of the Promiser.

Verse 15. *If ye love me, keep my commandments*] This remark was most likely suggested by the manifest sadness which may even yet be supposed to have oppressed the apostles in view of being separated from their Master: and seems delicately to intimate, that though he was about to be personally removed from them, and therefore no longer capable of receiving at their hands those respectful and tender marks of attachment which they had hitherto paid him, they could yet exhibit their love in a manner which would be equally gratifying to him—namely, by scrupulously obeying his commands. It is not unlikely that the “commandments” to which special reference was had were those which bore directly on their work as ministers—such as, faith in Christ, supreme devotion to him, and fervent love to each other. “*This is his commandment,*” exclaims the same evangelist who has blessed the church with the record of this conversation, “that we should *believe* in the name of Jesus Christ, and *love one another*, as he gave us commandment.” 1 John iii. 23. “A new commandment,” says Christ, “give I unto you, that ye *love one another* :” and again, “These things I command you, that ye *love one another*.” Our Saviour here requires of his followers something more than a mere profession of love to him; they must manifest that love by being the active ministers of their Master, in doing his pleasure, and working his work, in their families,

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever ;

in the church, and in the world. The "keeping his commandments" is, indeed, the only *sure evidence* of love to him ; mere *profession* of attachment is not *proof* of love. 1 John v. 2, 3. The word "if"—*if ye love me*—is not to be understood as implying that Jesus doubted whether the disciples loved him, but is to be taken in the sense of *since*, or *as*.

Verse 16. *I will pray the Father*] Christ probably here refers to his assumption of the office of Intercessor, after his ascension into heaven. *And he shall give you another Comforter*] Meaning, the Holy Spirit. Hitherto Jesus had been the instructor, counsellor, and guide of his disciples : and we presume it is not giving too loose a rein to the imagination to suppose that often, notwithstanding their prejudices, while he sought to pour divine light and love into their minds and hearts, they, as afterward did the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, felt their heart burn within them while he opened to them the Scriptures. He was to them, emphatically, "a comforter—a helper—an intercessor." But he was about to leave them—"it was expedient for them that he should"—yet is he not unmindful of them—"he promises them another" and *greater* "comforter." The word rendered "comforter" (*paraclete*) may, the learned tell us, be translated with equal propriety, *teacher* or *monitor*, *helper*, *advocate* or *intercessor*, according as the sense requires. In verse 26 of this chapter, the Holy Spirit is promised as an infallible *teacher* ; in xvi. 7, 8, as a faithful *monitor* ; in Rom. viii. 26 he is set forth as a *helper* ; and in 1 John ii. 1, where Christ is

17 *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him:

termed our *paraclete*, it is rendered "advocate," because he is in that passage represented as pleading our cause at the tribunal of Heaven. There is no single word in our language which expresses *fully* the import of the original. In this discourse, however, perhaps the word *comforter* yields the best *sense*, being most agreeable to the intent and character of its contents—which were designed to be, and are, highly consolatory. Besides, the result of his instructions as the great Teacher—as the "Spirit of truth"—would be not only to inform the mind, but to bring strong consolation into the heart. *That he may abide with you for ever*] That is, with *them* to the end of life; and with their *successors* to the end of time. Jesus abode with his followers but for a short time, but the Holy Spirit shall remain with them permanently, teaching, comforting, advising, defending, interceding for, and purifying them.

Verse 17. *Even the Spirit of truth*] That is, the author and imparter of all spiritual truth, especially "that which respects Christ, and the divine counsels for the salvation of men by him. This truth our Lord caused to be manifested to the disciples by the divine Spirit, not only that they might themselves understand it, but be able to communicate it to others." *Whom the world*] Meaning, the resolutely sensual, corrupt, and worldly-minded part of its inhabitants, as is shown by the words following, which limit the appellation "world" to those who "see him not, neither know him," as contradistinguished from those who do "know him." *Cannot receive*] Cannot bring themselves so to admit his influences

but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.

into their minds and hearts as to profit by them. For this a sufficient reason is assigned. *It seeth him not, neither knoweth him*] Having no perception or realizing sense of the benefit and importance of the truths he would communicate to the soul. The carnal, sensual part of the world "see not, neither know" the Spirit of truth, because, from exclusive love and attention to worldly concerns, they neither understand nor care about spiritual things. *But ye know him*] Denoting, perhaps, that they *should hereafter* "know" him; for this evangelist often uses the present for the future tense. Some ancient copies read, *shall* know. To "know," here, may be used in the sense of to *approve*, or *love*. *He dwelleth with you*] Rather, *shall soon* "dwell with you." *Shall be in you*] Namely, as your infallible counsellor and guide, and the efficient agent of your miraculous acts. There is a sense, however, in which the "Spirit of truth"—the "Comforter"—dwells "with" and is "in" every Christian, purifying the heart, and creating within the soul all those holy affections and habits so aptly denominated by Paul, Gal. v. 22, 23, and Eph. v. 9, "the fruit of the Spirit."

Verse 18. *I will not leave you comfortless*] Meaning, perhaps, not *destitute*, either of consolation or of assistance. Some, indeed, render, as in the margin, "I will not leave you *orphans*;" but Bloomfield says, "the original is used generally of all who are *destitute*, whether children deprived of their parents, or parents of their children, or those who are left destitute of friends, or any who could aid them; and is, therefore, best rendered

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more ;
but ye see me : because I live, ye shall live also.

by an adjective." *I will come to you*] "These words are variously interpreted. Some refer them solely to Christ's reappearance, and sojourn with them, after his resurrection. Others take them, in a *figurative* sense, of his invisible and spiritual presence. But it is best to unite both interpretations: 'for,' as Tittman observes, 'Christ did return *literally* to his disciples, after his resurrection, in a visible manner; (John xx. 19, &c.;) and, *metaphorically*, unseen, after his ascension to heaven: he was also, as he promised to be in departing to heaven, (Matt. xxviii. 20,) perpetually *present with* them, by the gracious aid of his omnipotent power, in the discharge of their evangelical functions. He, in fact, gave them, when absent, greater aid than he had done when present.'"—*Bloomfield*.

Verses 19, 20. *Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more*] Rather, "Yet a little while, and the world *shall see* me no more," &c. This was spoken on the day of his death, reckoning the day in the Jewish method, as commencing at sunset; and consequently but a very "little while" before the removal of his visible presence from among them. By the "world," is meant the unbelieving part of the inhabitants of Palestine; who, missing the bodily presence of Jesus, and having no sense of his spiritual manifestations, might with propriety be said not to see him. *But ye see me*] That is, *will see me*. Spoken, probably, as before, both of his literal and spiritual manifestation of himself to them after his resurrection. *Because I live*] Meaning, probably, *shall return to life*. It is because of the resurrection

20 At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his ascension into heaven, "where he ever liveth" as our Mediator and Intercessor, that men attain the life of faith and love on earth, and shall hereafter enjoy the life of glory in heaven. *Ye shall live also*] This may refer both to their possession of spiritual life, and to the resurrection of their bodies from the dead. So Clarke. *At that day*] Referring, apparently, to the "day" when, after his "return to life," he should fulfil his promise of sending "the Spirit of truth." *Ye shall know that I am in my Father, &c.*] Being instructed to that effect by the Holy Ghost. The union of the believer with Christ, and through him with the Father, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, is one of the most astonishing and delightful truths contained in the glad tidings of salvation.

Verse 21. *He that hath my commandments*] Meaning, hath them in mind—constantly remembers them. *And keepeth them, &c.*] Not only bears them in mind, but practises them. The true test of love to Christ thus appears to be, the keeping his commandments. See on verse 15. *He—shall be loved of my Father*] And that with a strong, peculiar affection. But why? Because he bears the impress of the divine image. What greater honour, what higher delight, can be presented to man than this—to become the beloved of God! Reader, He would thus love *thee*—slight not his grace. *I—will*

22 Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

manifest myself to him] This revelation must be understood, as applied to believers generally, of an invisible and spiritual exhibition of the love of Christ: though, as far as the *immediate* disciples of our Lord were concerned, it may include the ideas both of a visible and invisible manifestation of the Son of God.

Verses 22, 23. *Judas*] Or Jude, called, in Matt. x. 3, "Lebbeus." He was brother of James the son of Alphaeus, and author of one of the Epistles contained in the New Testament. See Jude 1. *How is it that thou wilt manifest, &c.*] Meaning, apparently, *why* wilt thou do this? The question appears to have grown out of Christ's declaration recorded in the nineteenth verse. *Jesus answered*] Assigning as a reason for the distinction made by him between his disciples and "the world," that the former would "keep his words," or commands, and that consequently the "Father" would "love them," and he and the Son would "come unto" them,—that is, confer peculiar blessings upon them,—and make their "*abode* with them,"—by dwelling, spiritually, within their heart; thus leading Judas to infer that the peculiar manifestation of which Christ spoke would not consist, as he probably imagined it would, in revealing himself in external splendour as a temporal ruler, but as a spiritual monarch, whose throne was to be established in the heart. It is in this sense that Christians are figura-

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

tively called "the temple of God," the "temple of the Holy Ghost," &c. 1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19.

Verses 24, 25. *The word—is not mine*] That is, not *exclusively* mine, but conjointly mine and the Father's. He, therefore, who rejects it, rejects not only Christ, but God the Father. *These things have I spoken, &c.*] Intimating that they were delivered to them now for their present comfort and the future confirmation of their faith:—and assuredly the fulfilment which some of these promises speedily received was well calculated to strengthen their confidence in him, and lead them unwaveringly to rely on him for the full and entire completion of them all.

Verse 26. *The Comforter—shall teach you all things*] Meaning, all things necessary for them to know for the successful prosecution of their work. Some of these things they were at this time unable to comprehend. The apostles have here an unqualified promise of divine inspiration, so that in organizing and instructing the church, and in recording the truths essential to its edification, they should not be liable to err. The additional promise, "and bring all things to your remembrance," shows, however, that this "inspiration" was not of such a character as to preclude the proper use of their own

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you : not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice,

faculties; their memories were to be aided, not superseded.

Verse 27. *Peace I leave with you, &c.*] Or, as it may be rendered, "I bequeath to you." In this verse, and in the remainder of the chapter, our Lord speaks as a dying man, who, having gathered around him his friends, bequeaths to them some memorial of his love, makes his farewell address, and bestows on them his blessing. The "peace" spoken of may be supposed to denote, primarily, that "peace with God" which is secured to every believing soul as the consequence of justification. Rom. v. 1. The word "my" is thought to be emphatical, importing that the peace referred to is given by Christ only, which is indeed true, in the sense of his being its procuring cause. *Not as the world giveth, give I, &c.*] The word "as" is here thought to denote not so much the opposition which exists in the *mode of giving*, as in the *character of the gifts*, of Christ and the world. The "peace" which the "world" bestows is external, fleeting, and unsatisfactory, that which Jesus imparts is internal, abiding, and solid. Lord, evermore give us this peace!

Verse 28. *If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, &c.*] This seems to be a mild reproof, aimed at the disciples, for indulging in sadness at the prospect of his departure, and for fostering those prejudices which hindered their perception of the truths he had conveyed. "If ye loved," means, if your love were suitably enlightened—

because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

were of the right character. See on verse 19. *My Father is greater than I*] This is spoken, not of *nature*, but of *work* or *office*. Throughout this conversation Jesus speaks of himself as Mediator—as *sent* by “the Father” to perform a certain work. So far, then, he is inferior—as an ambassador is inferior to the monarch whom he represents: but in nature he is the same; and as Deity admits of no participation with an inferior, he must, having the nature of God, be really and truly divine. Indeed, the very terms of Christ’s declaration imply, that while there is inferiority in one respect, there is also equality in another; since it would be the height of absurdity for any created being to say of God, “My Father is greater than I.” But why should Christ’s return to the Father be matter of rejoicing to the apostles? Clearly because, 1st., evidence was thus given that he had finished his embassy; 2d., that he was going to prepare places for them, that “where he was, there they might be also.”

Verse 29. *I have told you—that ye might believe*] Might believe he had “gone to his Father.” The fulfilment of his predictions relative to his betrayal and death would naturally tend to confirm their faith in those which should as yet remain unaccomplished.

Verse 30. *Hereafter I will not talk much*] Not having the opportunity. *For the prince of this world*] Probably meaning Satan, who is so termed because of his reigning

31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

in the heart of wicked persons. Ephes. ii. 2. *Cometh*] That is, against me. It is not certainly known what was the nature of the assault here hinted at; nor, indeed, to what event Christ refers; though we rather think he alludes to the fact of his arrest, which we know, from the declaration of John, (xiii. 2,) was brought about, at least in part, by Satanic agency. See, also, Luke xxii. 53. *Hath nothing in me*] Hath no power over me, or, will have no effect against me; that is, in frustrating the plan of salvation.

Verse 31. *But that the world may know, &c.*] Several expositors think that something is left to be understood after the word "but;" and supply the deficiency thus:—"But [the prince of the world is permitted to attack me] that the world may know," &c. If this addition be allowable, and if the "attack" referred to be, as before suggested, the delivering up of Christ to the power of his enemies, that he might be put to death, there is thus educed another confirmation of this glorious truth,—that the vicarious death of Christ is one of the strongest possible manifestations of his "love to the Father," as it exhibits him undergoing this suffering and ignominy rather than the character of God should be in any wise dishonoured; and an exhibition no less clear of his love to men, in thus suffering in their stead to redeem them from eternal perdition. *Arise, let us go hence*] It is likely, however, that they did not immediately leave the room; for it is scarcely supposable that the deeply interesting contents of the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters, and especially the solemn and touching

LESSON XVI.

[A. D. 29.]

Conversation at the passover supper continued—The union of Christ and his followers represented under the figure of a vine—The apostles again exhorted to mutual love—Are encouraged to steadfastness under trials and persecutions—The Holy Ghost again promised.

JOHN XV.

I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter, were uttered in the streets of Jerusalem; and from the first verse of chap. xviii. it is certain they did not *now* set out for the mount of Olives. Probably, therefore, our Lord meant no more by this direction than that they should now make ready for their departure; and that either while they were doing this, or, as is more likely, when they had prepared, but before they set out, he gave the instructions and offered the prayer referred to.

NOTES ON JOHN XV.

Verse 1. *I am the true vine*] Meaning, that he might be compared not only to a good, but to *the most excellent* vine: as being the source of the greatest of all blessings. The Saviour, it is well known, was ever ready to draw illustrations of truth from surrounding objects or passing events; and it is not unlikely that he seized on this simile, either from having but a short time before handed a cup of wine to his disciples, saying that he would no more drink of "the fruit of the vine," (Luke xxii. 18; Matt. xxvi. 29,) or, from his attention being in

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every *branch* that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

some manner drawn to certain vines which may have been in view from the window of the room, and which the clear moonlight (the moon was now about full) revealed distinctly to his view. *My Father is the husbandman*] May be likened to "the husbandman:" who diligently cultivates and fosters the "vine," using every means to promote its growth and fruitfulness.

Verse 2. *Every branch in me*] "In me" as the vine—or rather, the *trunk*, as stock and branches make up the vine. *That beareth not fruit*] Either, probably, no fruit at all, as in the case of a dead or barren branch, or defective fruit, the branch not being sound. *He taketh away*] Lops off, or cuts it away; because its retention would prove injurious to the vine. *Every branch that beareth—he purgeth*] Purifieth—by ridding it of those useless shoots which interfere with its fruitfulness. There is here allusion to the *pruning* of vines, for the purpose of promoting the increase of their fruit. *That it may bring forth more fruit*] Both more in quantity, and better in quality.* As the lopping off of the superabundant shoots of the vine increases its productiveness, and improves the character of its fruit, by throwing a greater amount of nourishment to the clusters which are left, so the varied dispensations of God's providence tend, in the faithful Christian, to the increase of every virtue, and consequently to the bringing forth of "more fruit."

* "In modern Greece the vine is cut or purged in the following manner:—'Only two or three of the principal sprouts are permitted to grow up from the root; the rest are cut off; and this practice is often called by the Greeks *cleaning*.'"—*Hartley's Journal of a Tour in Greece*, as quoted by *Horne*.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot

The "branch," in this parable, may, in an accommodated sense, denote every professing Christian, but is to be applied more *especially* to Christian ministers, and to the *apostles in particular*. See verses 16 and 17. The "taking away" the unfruitful "branch" points out the separation of every unworthy member from the mystical body of Christ. "Lampe," says Bloomfield, "well observes that the purification of the soul is elegantly compared to the pruning of vine branches, when the dry wood is cut away, or the too luxuriant shoots and leaves removed;" and the object, "that it may bring forth more fruit," "suggests the thought," observes Doddridge, "that one of the noblest rewards God can bestow on former acts of obedience is, to make the soul yet more holy, and fit for further and more eminent service, though it should be by such painful afflictions as resemble the pruning of a vine."

Verse 3. *Now ye are clean, &c.*] Spoken, apparently, with covert allusion to the word "purgeth," or *purifieth*, in the preceding verse: and denoting, that as the branch of the vine is "purged," by pruning, from that which would, if permitted to remain, lessen its fruitfulness, so were they fitted, by the instructions they had received, and the removal of a large amount of ignorance, error, and prejudice from their mind, to bring forth "more fruit," in the public ministry of the gospel, than they would otherwise have been.

Verse 4. *Abide in me*] These apostles were already united to Christ by profession and faith, and they are here exhorted to *continue* in intimate conjunction

bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.

with him. The *union* here spoken of is one of affection, of purpose, of action. It supposes the devotion of the heart and life to Christ. *And I in you*] Meaning, "I *will* abide in you"—(for so the ellipsis must be supplied;) that is, on condition they should "abide in" him. This "abiding" is by the presence—the indwelling—of the Holy Spirit. The necessity of this union with him, in order to Christian usefulness, Jesus illustrates by the benefits flowing to the branch from its union with the parent stock:—so long as it is united to the trunk it continues fruitful, because it is thus intimately connected with the root, whence it derives nourishment, but if separated, it not only becomes unfruitful, but absolutely withers and dies. The continuance of its life is therefore dependant on its continued connection with the vine.

Verse 5. *He that abideth in me—the same bringeth forth much fruit*] Then the bringing forth of fruit—of "much fruit"—is the evidence of union with Christ. Query: In what state are those professed Christians whose lives exhibit little or none of this fruit, but who are, to all appearance, as other men? *Without me*] That is, *apart from*, or *separated from*, me. *Ye can do nothing*] Nothing in the way of producing fruit, good and acceptable to God. It is only by the agency of the Holy Ghost, "working in them to will and to do of God's good pleasure," that men can possibly bring forth "the peaceable fruits of righteousness;" and this agency is dependant on their reception of Christ—their becoming

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

and remaining united to him by faith. Hence we may learn, that to him is due the praise of being the efficient cause of all the good deeds of the Christian.

Verse 6. *If a man abide not in me*] If he cease to bring forth fruit. *He is cast forth as a branch, and is withered*] Rather, "as a branch which is withered;" that is, he is treated as a husbandman would treat a dead and unfruitful branch. "Our Lord, in the plainest manner, intimates that a person may be as truly united to him as the branch is to the tree that produces it, and yet be afterward cut off. No man can cut off a branch from a tree to which it was never united: and it is contrary to the letter and spirit of the metaphor to talk of being *seemingly* in Christ."—*Clarke*. The following context shows, that those who do not "abide in" Christ not only deprive themselves of the power of bringing forth "much fruit," but also subject themselves to deserved punishment.

Verse 7. *If my words*] My doctrines—my commandments. *Abide in you*] So "abide" as to be not only remembered, but practised; leading to zealous and unremitting exertion for the attainment of personal holiness and the spread of the cause of Christ. *Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done*] That is, they should receive, on asking, whatsoever assistance was necessary to their bringing forth "much fruit." This promise, though primarily made to the apostles in view of their duties as such, is also applicable to true Christians in all

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my

ages. God will bestow on them, in answer to earnest, faithful prayer, whatsoever they need to enable them to serve him in righteousness and true holiness, or to spread his cause.

Verse 8. *Herein*] In this—their bearing “much fruit.” *Is my Father glorified*] The good works of Christians “glorify” or honour God, because, being produced by the influences of his Holy Spirit, they serve to illustrate the divine character, are evidence of the power of his grace, and tend to recommend his cause to others, thus winning them over to the truth. *So shall ye be my disciples*] So shall it be *manifest that ye are* my disciples, or, so shall ye *really* be my disciples.

Verses 9, 10. *As the Father, &c.*] The “as” and “so” do not, probably, express the *degree*, but the *kind*, of love that Jesus bore to his followers; and which he still bears to them. How strong, ardent, and sincere, however, must that love be to admit of any comparison to the love of the Father for his “only-begotten Son!” *Continue ye in my love*] An exhortation to them to secure a place in his affections. This he meant them to do, as the verse following proves, by yielding the most implicit obedience to his commands. “How needless a caution,” observes Mr. Wesley, “if it were impossible for them not to abide therein!” *As I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide, &c.*] Meaning, as I, by keeping my Father’s commands, have continued to abide in his love.

love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Verse 11. *These things*] That they should continue to love him and obey his injunctions. *That my joy might remain in you*] "Rather," says Holden, "that my joy in you may remain; that is, that I may continue to take delight in you." *And your joy might be full*] Your joy, through continuing in my love, might be full and complete. We are thus taught, that by obeying the commandments of God the Christian both delights Christ and is enabled to take delight in Christ.

Verses 12-14. *This is my commandment, &c.*] A command *especially* to be observed, as being the *peculiar* test of discipleship. *That ye love one another*] See note on John xiii. 34, pp. 253, 254. "So deeply was this commandment engraven on the heart of this evangelist, that when, in his extreme old age, he used, as St. Jerome testifies, to be carried to the public assemblies of the believers, his constant saying was, 'Little children, love one another.'"—*Clarke*. "As I have loved you," means, with a love similar to mine. His love for them was about to lead him to die for them; they were required to manifest similar love for one another. *Greater love hath no man, &c.*] Man can manifest no stronger attachment for his friends than to be willing to die for them. But Jesus gave a superior exhibition of his love in that

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you,

he died, not for his friends, but, according to the declaration of the apostle, Rom. v. 6, 10, for his enemies. *Ye are my friends, if ye do, &c.*] Ye will be my friends, not in appearance only, but in reality, if ye are thus ready to die for each other and for me.

Verse 15. *Henceforth I call you not servants*] Which he had formerly done, at least by implication. Matt. x. 24, 25; John xii. 26; xiii. 13. *The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth*] That is, is not generally made acquainted with his purposes and plans. But Jesus had honoured them with the most implicit confidence, (so far as they were able to bear,) and especially, during the conversation of this evening, had made them acquainted with a number of the principal designs of God for the salvation of men. *I have called you friends*] Spoken in reference, probably, to the declaration contained in the fourteenth verse. He had also so called them once before. See Luke xii. 4. *All things that I have heard, &c.*] Meaning, I have made known unto you all things necessary for you to know at this time. The clause must be taken with this limitation, for Jesus subsequently declares there were some things which they were not then able to bear; (chap. xvi. 12;) and he instructed them further after his resurrection. Luke xxiv. 27. Acts i. 3.

Verse 16. *Ye have not chosen me, &c.*] He called them to be disciples before they chose him for Master. This consideration is probably advanced to excite them

and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you.

to gratitude and obedience, as showing them that the obligation was all on *their* side. *And ordained you*] Appointed you—that is, to the office and work of apostles. *That ye should go and bring forth fruit, &c.*] That ye should go and preach the gospel to the world, and gather together believers, and constitute them churches. *Your fruit should remain*] In these words it is hinted that those fruits should extend not only to the men of that age, Jews and Gentiles, but to those of all succeeding time. Thus far the design has been accomplished; and will most assuredly continue so to be, till the consummation of all things. *That whatsoever ye shall ask, &c.*] The word rendered “that” is said here to denote *result, or consequence*:—the meaning, then, is, that in consideration of their going and preaching the gospel, they might “ask whatsoever they would,” necessary for their success, and it should be given.

Verse 17. See on John xiii. 34, pp. 253, 254.

Verses 18–21. *If the world hate you*] By “world,” here, the carnal, wicked part of mankind are meant: perhaps the persecuting Jews are especially hinted at. In these verses our Lord adverts to the calamities which his disciples would have to encounter in consequence of their profession of faith in him; and exhorts them to a constant endurance of these evils, by reminding them of the treatment he had experienced in his own case.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

Ye know it hated me] Hence arose the calumnies and persecutions he had endured. *If ye were of the world]* Were like unto these persons in dispositions and habits. *The world would love his own]* Would love you, as being a part of themselves. *Because ye are not of the world]* Not assimilated to it, not partakers of the same spirit. *Therefore it hateth you]* And that *not only* because you do not enter into its practices, but especially because your course condemns it:

“The laws of Christ condemn a vicious world,
And goad it to revenge.”

Remember—the servant is not greater, &c.] This he had said on at least two occasions;—on their appointment to the apostleship, Matt. x. 24, 25, and in the earlier part of this conversation, John xiii. 16. *If they have kept, &c.]* But the majority of the people had *not* kept—that is, had not *obeyed*—his “saying,” or doctrine, neither would they theirs. This seems to be the *sense* of the passage. *All these things]* Spoken of the hatred and persecution to which allusion had been made. *For my name's sake]* On my account—from a spirit of enmity to me. *They know not Him that sent me]* “Know not” must here be taken in the sense of *acknowledge*

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin : but now they have no cloak for their sin.

not, or *love not*, God ; they cherished dispositions of heart which prevented their obtaining a true knowledge of him.

Verse 22. *If I had not come, &c.*] The passage comprised in this and the two succeeding verses is explanatory of the preceding, and is, apparently, designed to meet an objection which might arise, that the unbelief of the Jews, and their consequent rejection of him, were excusable, as being the result of ignorance. Our Lord seems to admit that involuntary ignorance would form a ground of palliation—but shows that this plea could not avail them, inasmuch as his doctrines had been clearly taught in their hearing, and he had performed the most wonderful works in confirmation of his claim that he was sent of God. Their ignorance and rejection of him were therefore the result of perversity, and they were inexcusable. *Spoken unto them*] Declared unto them the will of God, and explained unto them the way of salvation. *They had not had sin*] Had not committed this most grievous and appalling sin—of persecuting, rejecting, and crucifying Christ. This was the “sin” of which our Lord was speaking ; and both the context and the import of other passages of Scripture—for instance, Rom. ii. 12-15, and iii. 23—limit Christ’s declaration to this signification. The rejection of our Lord was the great, the crowning sin of the Jewish people of that age, and that which especially brought on them the judgments of God. But surely, if this were so aggravated a crime in the Jews, it is no less so in us ; and if their unbelief subjected them to so fearful an overthrow, the infidelity

23 He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin : but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

of those who now refuse to accredit the testimony that Jesus is the Son of God—the alone Saviour of sinners—will not be permitted to pass unnoticed or without punishment, here or hereafter. *Now they have no cloak, &c.*] Meaning, as in the margin, “they are without excuse” for their unbelief; their rejection of Christ being in opposition to the clearest and strongest light. So are we.

Verse 23. *He that hateth me*] “As,” says Mr. Wesley, “every unbeliever doth : for as the love of God is inseparable from faith, so is the hatred of God from unbelief.” Jesus probably alludes here to the injurious treatment he had received, and was about fully to experience, and which had its origin in a spirit of opposition to God. *Hateth my Father also*] Christ being one with the Father. “How much is it to be wished,” observes Doddridge, “that those who make light of Christ, while they pretend a great veneration for the Father, would seriously attend to this weighty admonition, lest haply they be found even to fight against God.”

Verse 24. *If I had not done—the works which none other did, &c.*] By “works,” here, we are to understand the miracles he had performed. These he in substance declares were greater than those performed by Moses or any other man : and being so, heightened the guilt of the Jews in denying to them that conviction—or rather, in resisting the conviction our Lord seems to intimate they had produced—that their author was “sent of God,”

25 But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, they hated me without a cause.

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send

which their testimony so reasonably claimed.* "Of this stubborn unbelief our Lord makes mention, in order to show that the blame thereof rested solely with the Jews, and therefore the apostles need not stumble at it." *Now have they both seen and hated, &c.*] By "seen," here, is probably meant *acknowledged, admitted*—that is, to themselves—yet the conviction was stifled; and from its connection, it would appear that this secret conviction that Jesus was the Messiah was the reason of their bitter "hatred" of him, and of the persecutions with which they followed him, even unto death.

Verse 25. *This cometh*] The reference is to the persecution and hatred spoken of in the preceding verses. *That the word might be fulfilled, &c.*] That is, thus was fulfilled the "word" or prediction contained in their "law," or scriptures. The quotation is made from Psa. xxxv. 19, or lxix. 4, and is supposed to be not only descriptive of the wrongs inflicted on the psalmist by his enemies, but also prophetic of the unjust persecutions and enmity with which the Jews—especially the rulers—followed Christ.

Verse 26. *The Comforter—whom I will send*] In chap. xiv. 16 is recorded the promise of Jesus, that this

* "It is well observed by Doddridge, that Christ's miracles might be said to be greater than those of the prophets, inasmuch as they proceeded from a self-derived power, and were worked at all times; which does not appear to have been the case with those of the prophets."—*Bloomfield*. Some of his miracles were, too, more stupendous, in themselves considered.

unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me ;

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

“Comforter” would be sent, at his request, by the Father; he here declares that he will himself send him:—thus showing that the acts of the one are the acts of the other. In other passages, too, the Holy Ghost is termed indifferently the Spirit of the Father and of the Son—Matt. x. 20; Rom. viii. 9—hence we conclude that he proceedeth from the Father and the Son. *He shall testify of me*] Meaning, probably, he shall vindicate me from the aspersions of my enemies, and maintain my claim to the Messiahship. This was effectually done by the miraculous powers with which the apostles were subsequently endued, and by the light and truth which he shed, and still sheds, into the mind and heart of man.

Verse 27. *Ye also shall bear witness*] “Bear witness” to the fact of his being the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. And they did, indeed, bear a glorious testimony, and sealed it, almost every one of them, with their blood. *Because ye have been with me from the beginning*] From the beginning of his public ministry: and had thus become intimate with his private as well as public character,—with his instructions and his miracles. They were thus fitted to be competent witnesses. And their testimony, corroborated, as it has ever been, by the influences of the Spirit of God, has produced a wonderful revolution in the religious and moral state of mankind; raising them from the love of sin to the love of holiness; from the worship of idols to the worship of the true God; from a state of absolute slavery to every unholy passion, to the practice of the

LESSON XVII.

[A. D. 29.]

Continuation of the conversation after supper—Jesus informs the apostles of his design in telling them of the trials which awaited them, &c.—He again promises them the influences of the Holy Spirit as an infallible teacher—More minutely predicts their sufferings, but cheers them with the assurance of his presence and aid.

JOHN xvi.

THESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

kindest virtues and the highest degree of moral freedom. May their "witness" speedily reach "to the farthest verge of the green earth!"

NOTES ON JOHN xvi.

Verse 1. *These things have I spoken*] The reference is to "the things" spoken of in the two preceding chapters—especially our Lord's death, the apostles' trials, and the strong consolations and mighty aid of the Holy Spirit. *That ye should not be offended*] That is, not *stumbled*, or caused to fall from their faith in Christ;—that they might not apostatize, neither desist from the exercise of their apostolic office. The prospect of approaching sufferings might have had a tendency to discourage them, if unaccompanied by any promise of divine assistance; but in view of that assistance, their prior knowledge of the coming evils would greatly cheer them—1st., because those evils would not come unexpectedly, to the sudden blighting of any high hopes they might have entertained; 2d., because it would be to them a

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues : yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

proof that He in whom they trusted had foreseen and prepared for these events.

Verses 2, 3. *They shall put you out of the synagogues*] Shall excommunicate, or cut you off from the privileges of their church membership. Dr. A. Clarke says, this was deemed a very disgraceful punishment, and accompanied not only by the loss of religious privileges, to a great extent, but by the deprivation of property. *Will think that he doeth God service*] "Literally, 'offereth a sacrifice to God;'—that is, will think that he performs an act as acceptable to God as would be the offering of any of the authorized sacrifices." The persecuting Jews regarded the apostles and early Christians as injurious persons, who sought to overthrow the religion which God had established, and to set up in the place thereof an unauthorized and fanatical system, which the divine Being could not approve. Hence they supposed they were rendering acceptable service to God in persecuting and killing them. The Acts of the Apostles furnishes several instances of the fulfilment of this prediction. Acts vi. 13, 14; ix. 23, 24; xii. 2. We may thus learn that *sincerity* is not all that is requisite in religion. *Have not known, &c.*] Not rightly apprehended their characters, nor what was really pleasing to them; if they had, they would have seen how odious persecution and strife are to them: or, it may be that the words "not known," &c., are to be taken in the sense of *are not like unto*.

4 But these things have I told you, that, when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me ; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou ?

Verse 4. *I said not at the beginning, &c.*] At the beginning of their ministry. He did, to be sure, inform them, at the time he first sent them out to preach, that they would be subjected to many and severe trials, (Matt. x. 16, &c.,) but he spoke not then so definitely on this subject as now, and said nothing of his own death. Neither did he then open to them the prospect of such comfort and assistance as he now held out, in the promise of the Holy Ghost ; simply because, having to remain with them a considerable time longer, it was not then needful that he should be so particular : but being now about to depart, and it being desirable for their comfort and encouragement that this information should be no longer withheld, he communicates it fully and freely.

Verse 5. *Now I go my way*] And therefore forewarn you of the approaching calamities. *None of you asketh, Whither goest thou ?*] Meaning, probably, *now* ask : for Peter had put this question in the early part of the conversation, (xiii. 36,) and Thomas had asked one nearly similar (xiv. 5) in a somewhat later stage. There seems to be reproof couched in this remark of the Saviour ;—not, perhaps, called forth so much by their silence, as by the *cause* of that silence. They were indulging (as we learn from verse 6) in grief—sad and deep ; when they ought to have submitted to this painful separation with cheerfulness, inasmuch as he had told them it was for

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth ; It is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

their benefit. The great dramatic poet finely expresses, in the following line, the emotion which seems to have filled the hearts of the desponding disciples—

“Light sorrows speak ; *great grief is dumb.*”

Verse 7. *It is expedient for you that I go away*] Meaning, perhaps, that it would be *better* for them. Campbell renders, “It is for your *good.*” This he said to comfort them, for “sorrow had filled their heart.” *If I go not, the Comforter will not come*] But what advantage would there be in his “coming” over Christ’s remaining? Much:—1st. If Jesus had remained, he could not have made atonement, or purchased for mankind the blessing of pardon ; for we are assured, that without “the shedding of blood”—the blood of the *true* sacrificial victim—“there is no remission.” 2d. The death and resurrection of Christ were necessary to the completion of the new system of religion ; without this, it would have been deficient, lacking the greatest proof of its truth and power. 3d. “While on the earth the Lord Jesus could be bodily present but in one place at one time. Yet, in order to secure the great design of saving men, it was needful that there should be some agent who should be in all places, who could attend all ministers, and who could at the same time apply the work of Christ to men in all parts of the earth.” 4th. It was an evident arrangement in the great plan of redemp-

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment :

tion, that each of the persons of the Trinity should perform a part. As it was not the work of the Spirit to make the atonement, so it was not the work of the Saviour to apply it. And until the Lord Jesus had performed his great work of giving up his life on the cross, it was not proper—the way was not open—for the Holy Spirit to perform *his* part of the great plan. Yet, when the Saviour had completed *his* portion of the work, and had left the earth, the Spirit would carry forward the same plan, and apply it to men. Hence it was expedient that the Lord Jesus should go away, that the Spirit might descend, and apply the work to the children of men. Notwithstanding these benefits to be derived from the departure of Christ, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, that departure was to the apostles a source of deep affliction. Yet, had they seen *the whole case*, as he saw it, they would have chosen the course which he appointed. Let us learn, then, in all our afflictions, to rely confidently on the wisdom and goodness of God, assured that he doeth all things well.

Verse 8. *He will reprove the world of sin*] That is, he will *convince* men that they *are sinners*—he will give them incontestable evidence of this fact. This he does by setting before them the requirements of God and their own acts; and by contrasting the purity and fitness of the one with the wickedness and unreasonableness of the other—thus proving to them both the nature and demerit of sin, and fastening the conviction upon their hearts that *they* have sinned. It would appear from the ninth verse, that *the sin* especially referred to was that of rejecting and crucifying Christ;—if so, it is probable that by “the

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

world," here, our Lord speaks *particularly* of the opposing Jews, though not of them *exclusively*, but also of all who, like them, maliciously reject his salvation. *Of righteousness*] See on verse 10. *Of judgment*] See on verse 11.

Verse 9. *Of sin, because they believe not in me*] To "believe not" in Christ is virtually to *disbelieve*—that is, to REJECT him. There are no *neutrals* in religion: but all persons who have arrived at years of understanding are either the *friends* or the *enemies* of Jesus; they are either "with" him or "against" him. Matt. xii. 30. Unbelief is the *great sin* of mankind, and includes within its ample folds all other sins: and is therefore peculiarly offensive to God, and effectually bars the gates of salvation against him who is under its influences. Mark xvi. 16. As it regards the Jews especially, it was this crime—their rejection and crucifixion of Christ—which, when brought home to their consciences by the preaching of the apostles and the power of the Spirit, filled many of their hearts with remorse, and ultimately brought them to repentance. Acts ii. 36, 37, 41. Indeed, faith in Christ as our Saviour affords the only means of escape from the "wrath to come," inasmuch as he is the only available sacrifice for sin.

Verse 10. *Of righteousness, &c.*] Meaning, of my "righteousness," or innocence, of which my going "to my Father" is the convincing evidence. Jesus was condemned and executed as a blasphemer, for claiming to be the "Son of God;" (Matt. xxvi. 65; John xix. 7;) but his triumphant resurrection from the dead, and his

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

glorious ascension into heaven, are the incontestable proofs of his innocence, and of the validity of his claim. Rom. i. 4. Had he been an impostor and blasphemer, God would not thus have honoured him. "It was a matter of the utmost consequence to the Christian cause," observes Dr. A. Clarke, "to have the innocence of its founder demonstrated, and the crime of the Jews, in putting him to death, made manifest to the world."

Verse 11. *Of judgment, because, &c.*] Meaning, probably, that the Holy Spirit would, at his coming, convince the world that Satan, as the author of sin, was "judged" or *condemned* by the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and that they, as his followers, were exposed to the same condemnation, and that punishment would be executed on them, unless they embraced Jesus. Here, then, is abundant reason why the disciples should not be filled with sorrow, since the Holy Ghost would, after Christ's departure, accomplish so great and merciful ends. But let us not forget to ask ourselves, Does the Holy Spirit *condemn* or *approve* me?

In all that our Lord says here, (verses 8-11,) there seems to be allusion to the office of an *advocate* in a cause in a court of justice; who, by producing witnesses, and pleading upon the proof, convicts the opposite party of sin, demonstrates the righteousness of his client, and shows the necessity of passing judgment or condemnation upon the guilty party.

Verse 12. *I have yet many things to say*] "Many things" which he desired to say, in relation to the exten-

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

sion and establishment of the church, especially, it is thought, of the abrogation of the ceremonial law, justification by faith, the calling of the Gentiles, &c. *But ye cannot bear them now*] “Cannot bear” has here the sense of *cannot comprehend*, or *understand*. The apostles were still warped by their Jewish prejudices, and hence were not at this time in a suitable frame of mind for the reception of those doctrines. They subsequently embraced them, however, under the teachings of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 13. *He will guide into all truth*] Will teach you all the truth necessary for your work, and that without any admixture of error, or the keeping any thing back, as I do at present, from the force of circumstances. The *personality* of the Holy Spirit is here distinctly taught; personal actions being attributed to him. *He shall not speak of himself*] By his own authority merely: but with the authority of the triune God. *Whatsoever he shall hear*] Of the counsel of the Father and the Son, with all of whose counsels he is intimate. The Spirit is represented as *hearing* the things spoken of, because it is by oral communications that instructions are generally given among men. *That shall he speak*] That shall he communicate to you; though probably not by an audible voice. *He will show you things to come*] He will not only open to you the whole truth of things *past*, but also, as often as need shall require, “he will tell you things future, and of which I have said nothing to you; namely, what shall happen either to the world

14 He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show *it* unto you.

16 A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me; because I go to the Father.

at large, or to the Jewish people, or to the church." Acts xx. 23; 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Tim. iii. 1, 2.

Verse 14. *He shall glorify me*] Shall honour me, by his revelations and instructions; for they will be of such a character as to exalt me in the estimation of all candid and well-disposed persons. And as all the instructions of the Spirit are derived from, so they lead to, Christ. *Shall receive of mine*] Literally, "shall receive from me." *Shall show it unto you*] Shall announce or communicate to you what he thus receives from me. This is especially the work of the Holy Ghost. He thus carries on, not a separate and distinct work, but the work which Jesus commenced when on the earth.

Verse 15. *All things that the Father hath are mine*] Are "mine" equally with "the Father." These words denote the most perfect community of possession, and therefore equality of right. *Therefore said I, &c.*] As Christ has "all things" which the Father has, then has he all the attributes and perfections belonging to the Father, and is consequently God. Being thus coequal with the Father, he might properly say that the Holy Ghost "shall receive of mine," or from me, "and show it unto you."

Verse 16. *A little while, and ye shall not see me*] This is spoken of Christ's rapidly approaching death, and of his lying in the grave. His crucifixion and burial took

17 Then said *some* of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me : and again a little while, and ye shall see me : and, *Because I go to the Father*?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while ? we cannot tell what he saith.

place this very day. *A little while, and ye shall see me*] By the "little while" here is meant, the time he remained in the sepulchre, which was until the morning of the third day. He then rose, and appeared to them. So that, after a "little while," they again saw him visibly among them. *Because I go to the Father*] For which reason it is necessary I should rise from the dead ; and therefore I will so rise, and manifest myself to you and others, that you may be assured of the fact. Some think the clause elliptical, and understand the Saviour's meaning to be—"I use this language, because I am going to the Father."

Verses 17, 18. *Among themselves*] Privately, secretly ; perhaps in a whisper, so that their Master might not hear. *What is this that he saith, &c.*] That is, What does he *mean* by saying, "A little while," &c. *We cannot tell what he saith*] Do not perceive his meaning. "It has been thought surprising that the apostles failed to comprehend the words of our Lord. But the thing is easily accounted for when we consider their conciseness, and remember that they were *predictive*, and perhaps *intentionally* obscure, being designed to be *fully understood* only on their fulfilment. Besides, the apostles' perceptions were clouded by deep-rooted prejudices, as to the temporal nature of Christ's kingdom, and dulled by their excess of sorrow on learning that, whatever might be the full sense of the words, they were to

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

be deprived of their Lord. Their greatest perplexity, no doubt, was with the words 'Because I go to the Father,' which they were not likely to understand in the true sense. They might, indeed, and probably did comprehend that they were first to be deprived of, and then to receive back, their Lord; but as they firmly believed that the Messiah was to come and establish an earthly kingdom, they could make nothing out of the last words."—*Bloomfield.*

Verses 19, 20. *Jesus knew they were desirous to ask*] To ask of him an explanation of what he had just said. This he knew by his attribute of omniscience. *Do ye inquire, &c.*] Some read this as a declaration—*Ye do inquire, &c.*:—but the interrogative form has perhaps more spirit, and is usual with our Lord in such cases. It is also supported by some of the best versions. *Ye shall weep and lament*] On account of his death. *The world shall rejoice*] By "world," here, is probably meant the malicious part of the Jewish nation:—especially the priests and Pharisees. These would rejoice at having brought about his death, and thus delivered themselves from the rebukes of a faithful reprovcr of their wickedness. It was, however, chiefly for claiming to be the Messiah that the rulers sought and obtained the crucifixion of our Lord. *Your sorrow shall be turned into joy*] By Christ's resurrection and ascension. See Luke xxiv. 41,

21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

52. If the resurrection and ascension of Jesus from the dead were matter of rejoicing to the heart-stricken apostles, which they most assuredly were, they should be no less so to us; for we derive from them benefits fully equal—perhaps superior—to those conferred in consequence on them. The sudden transition from sorrow, on account of his death, to joy, because of his resurrection, our Lord illustrates in the following verse by a striking and well-known image.

Verses 21, 22. *A woman, when in travail, hath sorrow*] Rather, “is in pangs”—in suffering. Excessive pain or acute grief is, in Scripture, frequently likened to the pains of child-birth: and from its employment here we may gather a tolerably accurate idea of the anguish of the apostles at the unexpected, violent, and ignominious death of their beloved Master. *Her hour is come*] The time of her illness. *A man is born*] A human being. The original word denotes either a male or female child. As it is not, however, merely because another being is born into the world that a mother rejoices at such a time, but especially because of her delivery from the anxieties incident to her situation, and of the full play of her feelings of attachment to her babe, so the apostles would particularly rejoice at the resurrection of Christ from the dead, as delivering them from all their fears, and yielding the fullest confirmation of their long-cherished hopes that Jesus was “the Son

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give *it* you.

of God, the King of Israel." *I will see you again*] Equivalent to a promise that he would return to them. The language would be applicable to his occasional intercourse with his disciples after his resurrection and prior to his ascension, but it is probably especially meant of his spiritual presence with them after his ascent. *Your joy no man taketh from you*] No one shall take it from you: but it shall be uninterrupted and permanent, not fluctuating or uncertain, as all joy founded on human affairs must be. Perhaps the joy of the apostles at the resurrection and ascension of Jesus was greater than it would have been if they had not known the preceding "sorrow;" as the shining of the sun appears the brighter for the cloud which had obscured his rays. So the various trials and afflictions of the Christian may (and, if he be faithful, *shall*) be overruled for his good, and made subservient to his increased comfort and blessedness.

Verse 23. *In that day*] The time of his spiritual presence, as noticed in the preceding verse. *Ye shall ask me nothing*] Meaning, probably, that there would then be *no need* of their asking such questions as they now frequently put, for their minds would be divinely illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and guided by him into all truth necessary for them to know. It would seem that the remark is not to be understood of prayer, but of the asking of questions respecting their duty, his doctrines, &c. The original word is different from that rendered "ye shall ask," in the clause following. *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father*] "The word here trans-

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs:

lated 'ye shall ask,' properly signifies to *present a request*, as the other did to ask questions." *He will give it*] Christ had before said that *he* would grant such requests; now, that the Father would grant them—another proof of their *oneness*.

Verse 24. *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name*] That is, we presume, they had not asked of God any thing for his cause; but, whenever in need of advice, assistance, or instruction, had applied directly to Christ himself. *Ye shall receive*] Through the agency of the Holy Spirit. *That your joy may be full*] May be complete, perfect; so that there should be no sense of lacking. The reference would seem to be to the joy spoken of in the twenty-second verse. It was there said that their "sorrow" at his death would be converted into "joy" at his reappearance. But that joy would be dissipated when he should again leave them, unless they had some source of spiritual illumination and comfort; this is here promised, with the assurance that thus their joy should be not only permanent, but full.

Verse 25. *These things*] The "things" spoken of during this conversation, especially his death and resurrection, and ascension into heaven. *Have I spoken in proverbs*] "In proverbs" here means in obscure, enigmatical terms. Probably Jesus is to be understood as speaking rather of the light in which the apostles would at first regard his instructions on these points than of the language in which his teachings were conveyed; for to persons free from the bias of strong prejudice his declara-

but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.

26 At that day ye shall ask in my name : and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you ;

tions are sufficiently clear and explicit to be readily comprehended, though to the apostles they might at first appear obscure, if not absolutely unintelligible, because of the power of their prepossessions in reference to his character and the nature of his kingdom. *The time cometh—when I shall show you plainly of the Father*] Meaning, probably, concerning the designs, wishes, &c., of “the Father.” See Acts x. The promise to “show plainly” may be regarded as importing that they should be enabled clearly to understand the intentions and will of the Father ; and was fulfilled, after the resurrection, by the personal instructions of Christ, (Luke xxiv. 27, 44–49,) and after the ascension, by the teachings of the Spirit of all truth. Christians are now “plainly shown” “these things” by the blessed volume of inspiration, by the powerful, though silent teachings of the Holy Ghost applying the truth, and by the ministrations of the gospel.

Verses 26, 27. *At that day*] Referring to the period subsequent to his ascension. *Ye shall ask in my name*] Pray to the Father in “my name,”—for my cause and sake. *I say not that I will pray, &c.*] This is not to be taken as a declaration that he would *not* pray, but simply as an intimation that he did not regard it necessary to give them now an assurance that he would, having already (John xiv. 16) substantially promised so to do. So far, therefore, from being a negation, the passage has the force of a strong affirmation that he would intercede for them : and is therefore in accordance with those parts of the

27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

sacred writings which represent Jesus as our Intercessor before God. Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24. *For the Father himself loveth you*] Here is an additional reason why Christ need not again tell them that he would pray; the Father, as well as himself, loved them, and would be led, by the promptings of this love, to grant their reasonable and proper requests. *Because ye have loved me, and have believed, &c.*] The Scriptures elsewhere assure us that "we love him, [God,] because he *first loved us*;" (1 John iv. 19;) here the love of God to the disciples is predicated on their love to and belief in Jesus. Are the statements at variance? Not at all. The love of God alluded to in the epistle of John is emotion excited by pity for man in the deplorable condition into which sin had cast him, including, also, the idea of help, in order to his recovery from that low estate; the love *here* had in view is an emotion excited by the contemplation of something in men pleasing to the divine Being—and that is, their confidence in, and love to Christ.

Verse 28. *I came forth from the Father*] Meaning, probably, not so much that he was sent by him, as that he had existence with him prior to his being thus sent, and derived his generation from him. "Therefore, (to use the words of Tittman,) what John has taught us in the beginning of his Gospel, (i. 18,) namely, that our Lord existed before the creation of the world, *was with God*, in the bosom of the Father, *and so was God*; this our Lord has himself declared in the present passage."—*Bloomfield*. See, also, John viii. 42. *Am come into the*

29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and

world] As man, in order to make an atonement for the transgressions of the human race, and free mankind from the power and guilt of sin here, and from its punishment hereafter. 1 John iii. 8; Matt. i. 21; John iii. 19. *I leave the world, &c.]* Spoken of his vicarious death and ascension. The declaration contained in this verse gave the disciples a *key*, says Dr. A. Clarke, to the whole of our Lord's discourse, especially to the part (ver. 16) that had, as appears from verses 17, 18, so exceedingly embarrassed them.

Verses 29, 30. *Now speakest thou plainly, &c.]* Not obscurely or enigmatically, but in terms which they understood; or, at least, which they *thought* they comprehended. Subsequent events lead us to doubt, however, the correctness of their apprehension. They probably thought that Jesus would, for a time, return to the Father; but that he would speedily come back to them, and establish a glorious temporal dominion, and fulfil all their desires and expectations by promoting them to offices of trust and honour. *Now we are sure thou knowest all things]* This remark seems to have been called forth by the question of Christ recorded in the nineteenth verse. The disciples, it will be remembered, were greatly perplexed at his declaration, "A little while, and ye shall not see me," &c., and inquired among themselves as to his meaning, though in so private a manner that Jesus could not hear: and though they wished an explanation, they seem to have been afraid to ask it. His subsequent question, and the clearer manner in which he had just expressed himself in relation to the events then, as they

needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave

thought, so obscurely expressed, appear to have satisfied them that he was acquainted with their secret desires, and consequently could read the heart. *Needest not that any man should ask thee*] “Needest not,” &c., means that, in their estimation, it was not requisite, in order to the obtaining from Jesus an explanation of any difficulty which might exist in a man’s mind, that he should make known that difficulty, for they had just received such an explanation, not only without requesting it, but without giving him any intimation that they were labouring under the slightest uncertainty. *By this we believe that thou camest forth from God*] The evidence just furnished that thou art acquainted with man’s secret desires is to us convincing proof that thou art sent by God: for certainly no man could do this without divine aid. Indeed, we have no account of any of the prophets being divinely influenced to this extent. The apostles probably deemed their assertion equivalent to a declaration that they believed Jesus to be the Messiah, for it is said that the Jews attributed the power of discerning the thoughts to the Christ.

Verses 31, 32. *Do ye now believe?*] This they doubtless did; and we cannot think that Jesus meant to question the fact:—but his language conveys the idea that he knew they would not continue to believe—would not maintain their steadfastness. Perhaps he designed to admonish them against undue confidence in themselves. *Behold,—ye shall be scattered*] An allusion to their

me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye foreseen desertion of him at his apprehension, trial, and crucifixion. See Matt. xxvi. 31, 56. *Every man to his own*] Meaning, probably, to his own house, or to temporary accommodations around Jerusalem. This prediction was literally fulfilled, not a single apostle standing by him and boldly avowing his cause during the time of his ignominy. *Shall leave me alone*] Without friends: not even one to cheer or sympathize with him. This privation was a part of his appointed sufferings, and was doubtless keenly felt, for, as man, he was susceptible of human infirmity. But it was borne, as were all his other sufferings, with the greatest patience and resignation. Although their desertion of him was foreseen, and probably deeply regretted, it calls forth no complaint. *Yet—the Father is with me*] To sustain him under the severe trials he was about to undergo, by the endurance of which man's redemption was accomplished. True, there was a time when, in his agony on the cross, the consolations and supports of the divine favour seem to have been partially withdrawn, and Jesus was compelled, in the bitterness of anguish, to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. xxvii. 46:) but it is manifest that he was not forsaken in the sense of abandoned, or his confidence in the divine regards at all shaken, for he directly adds, (according to Luke xxiii. 46,) "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." We must therefore suppose that the Father was "with him" during his sufferings, approving of them, and generally encouraging him in their endurance.

Verse 33. *These things have I spoken*] Some com-

might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

mentators limit the "things" to which reference is here made to the declaration contained in the thirty-second verse; but it is probably better to understand the allusion to be to the statements made during the whole conversation. *That in me ye might have peace*] Meaning, that through faith in him, and consequent belief of the truths he had now communicated to them, they might secure tranquillity of mind, notwithstanding the trials which would come upon them. There is probably allusion to that "peace" he had so solemnly bequeathed them a short time before, as recorded xiv. 27. These communications would have a natural tendency to increase their peace, inasmuch as they accounted for many things which would otherwise have been incomprehensible and greatly perplexing: and also proved to them that their Lord would not neglect them, but continue to supply them with all needed grace. *Be of good cheer*] Of good courage. He would not have them dejected or disheartened by their tribulations, but endure them with cheerfulness, knowing that they would be finally brought off victorious. The expression is one "particularly used to animate to *battle* by the hope of victory." *I have overcome the world*] The present tense is employed for the future:—the meaning being, "I *shall* overcome." By "world" is meant the malignant, opposing part thereof:—his enemies of every character. This was to the apostles, doubtless, a most animating consideration, as it implies that as he had "overcome" or foiled his adversaries, so he would enable them to overcome. The recollection of this victory should afford peace and consolation in the day of trial and tribulation to the fol-

LESSON XVIII.

[A. D. 29.]

Jesus prays to the Father, that he would glorify him; and also, that he would keep, bless, and glorify the disciples, and all future believers in him.

JOHN xvii.

THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

lower of Jesus. The triumph of his Lord and Master is the earnest of his own triumph, and the cause of it. Let him, then, bear temptation and trial with composure, assured that, if faithful, he will finally share in the honours and benefits of his Saviour's victory.

NOTES ON JOHN xvii.

Having concluded his discourse to the disciples, Jesus offered, apparently immediately after, the following most affectionate and earnest prayer; in which he commends his disciples, and all future believers, to the care, protection, and blessing of God; and entreats the Father to bring them, ultimately, to share in his glory. It is remarked by one commentator, that had we no other knowledge of Christ than this prayer furnishes, it alone would be sufficient to demonstrate the dignity of his nature, his magnanimity, his ardent love to the human race, and the transcendant excellence of the work he was about to complete.

Verse 1. *Lifted up his eyes, &c.*] An expression denoting that he then engaged, with earnest and reverent supplication, in prayer to God. *The hour is come*] The

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

appointed time of his suffering and death had arrived :— he was just about to enter on the fearful struggle. *Glorify thy Son*] It would seem, from the record contained in the fifth verse, that the glorification Jesus now sought was, chiefly, to be exalted to heaven, and acknowledged the Mediator between God and man, that he might thus the more effectually promote the salvation of men. In compliance with the spirit and design of this request, the Father did “glorify” the Son, 1st. By raising him from the dead ; 2d. By taking him to heaven ; 3d. By pouring upon the world those remarkable effusions of the Holy Spirit which were first communicated on the day of Pentecost next following, and have ever since been continued to the true believer in Christ, in their enlightening, directing, comforting, and sanctifying operations. *That thy Son may glorify thee*] Through the increased success which would attend the promulgation of the gospel under the Mediatorial reign. It is especially by the preaching of the gospel of Christ, under the influences of the Holy Ghost, that the character of God is made known and caused to be honoured, and love toward him excited in the human heart.

Verse 2. *As thou hast given him*] In his character of Mediator. *Power over all flesh*] Authority over all men, whether believers or unbelievers ; for Christ is the universal Governor, (Eph. i. 20, &c. ; Col. i. 16–18,) and, as such, has the regulation of human affairs, the vicissitudes of time, &c., the better to secure man’s salvation. The word “as,” in the commencement of this verse, is to be understood in the sense of *inasmuch* as, or *since* ;

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

and taken in connection with the words immediately following it, suggests "the *reason* and *cause*" of the prayer here offered: our Lord referring both his own glory and that of his Father to the extension and success of the work committed to him. *That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him*] Meaning, to all who would believe on him. And let it be borne in mind that God is "not willing that any should perish," but desires "all should come to repentance," 2 Pet. iii. 9; hence it was the appointment of the Father that Jesus should "taste death for every man," (Heb. ii. 9,) which he did by "giving himself a ransom for all." 1 Tim. ii. 6. Believers are here said to be "given to" Christ, because it was ordained by God that they should be saved by his merits; and the power of bestowing "eternal life" on them was a privilege conferred on Jesus Christ on account of his having obtained eternal redemption for them by the sacrifice of himself on the cross.

Verse 3. *This is life eternal*] That is, the way in which "life eternal," or everlasting happiness, may be secured. *That they might know thee, the only true God*] Believe and acknowledge thee *to be* the "only true God." This persuasion and profession includes, also, the practice of such conduct as would be consistent therewith. Jehovah—the Father, Son, and Spirit—is here termed "the true God," in opposition to the numerous false gods whose worship was prevalent in the world. Mr. Wesley and Dr. Campbell render the passage, "This is life eternal, *to know thee*," &c. *And Jesus Christ*, &c.] Meaning, probably, "Know Jesus *to*

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own

be the Christ," or Messiah, and to be sent of God, for the salvation of men; or, "Know Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent," to be the Messiah. This knowledge includes, also, such confidence in its truth, as to lead the subject of it to depend on Christ as *his* Saviour. As the reception of these truths is the appointed way of salvation, it follows that none, possessed of opportunities for obtaining a knowledge of them, can be saved without their hearty belief and practice. Reader, dost *thou* believe?

Verse 4. *I have glorified thee*] This he had done by explaining and enforcing the divine commands; by the new and more interesting light in which he had exhibited the divine character in many respects—especially in its benevolence; by the miracles which he, conjointly with the Father, had wrought; and by his own universal obedience. *I have finished the work thou gavest me*] The work of human redemption, which Jesus was about to complete by his death and resurrection. This "work" is here said to be "finished," probably because he had ended his public instructions, and was so near completing his great and merciful undertaking by his passion, death, resurrection, and return to God. Bloomfield remarks, that our Lord's words here "breathe a holy triumph at so goodly a work being nearly completed."

Verse 5. *Glorify thou me with thine own self*] Instead of "with thine own self," Campbell and some others render, "in thine own presence:" while others retain the common rendering, and understand the petition in the sense of requesting admission to a participation in the divine glory. Not satisfied, however, with the bare re-

self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou

quest, Jesus goes on, probably for the apostles' sake, to show that he had formerly enjoyed this, and now sought to be reinstated. *With the glory I had with thee before the world was*] That is, before the world was created; an expression equivalent to saying, from eternity. This declaration is explicit as to the pre-existence of Christ: for if he was "with the Father," and "had" or *possessed* glory with him "before the world was," and which he laid aside when he became man, then he had an existence, not only before his incarnation, but before the foundation of the world. And further, since the "glory" here referred to is said to have been *enjoyed with God*, (or shared with him,) it can be understood only of that participation of the divine Majesty to which our Lord is so frequently represented, in this Gospel, as laying claim. In this petition he also prays that the Father would now invest him, as *Son of man*, and *Saviour of the human race*, with the glory and majesty which, as *Son of God*, he enjoyed from all eternity. To that state he was soon afterward exalted, and now enjoys it, with the *additional* honour of having made atonement for sin, opened the way for the restoration of the human family to the divine favour, and brought into the courts of heaven—nay, united to the very throne of God—the *nature* and *form* of the offending race for whose benefit he had so deeply interested himself. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!

Verse 6. *I have manifested thy name*] Made known the nature, character, and requirements of God. *Unto the men thou gavest me*] The apostles, who were "given

gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

7 Now they have known that all things, whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee:

to," or led to believe on, Jesus Christ, as the Saviour, that so they might receive that full and particular instruction which should fit them to become the messengers of his grace. *Thine they were*] They were God's—1st. In common with all other men, by creation and preservation; 2d. Probably as being his sincere worshippers, even before they became followers of Christ; for it is not unlikely that most, or all of these apostles, had been disciples of John. *Thou gavest them me*] For the purposes of instruction, &c., above stated. Our Lord speaks here, it will be remembered, not in his divine, but complex nature. Considered in reference to his divine nature, all men are *his* as well as the Father's. *They have kept thy word*] The commandments and other teachings delivered to them by Jesus. These, the original denotes, they had entirely acquiesced in and steadfastly adhered to, so far, at least, as they understood them.

Verses 7, 8. *They have known*] Have most assuredly believed—are convinced. *That all things thou hast given me*] All the instructions I have communicated to them. It is possible that in this expression, "all things," Jesus may include his *works* as well as *words*, but the context evidently requires that the phrase should be especially understood of his teachings. *Are of thee*] Have emanated from thee. This might truly be said, as the Father is the fountain of authority to the Son. The declaration in the first clause of the eighth verse is a repetition of the truth already frequently advanced,

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

that the instructions given by Christ imbodyed not his own views merely, but also those of the Father, and were such as the Father had directed him to publish. *Have known surely that I came out from thee*] An intimation that the apostles believed him to be of heavenly origin. *Have believed thou didst send me*] Consequently, that he came, not by his own will merely, but by the command of the Father. He was, as Mediator, *sent* for the performance of the things he accomplished. The same truth he had already advanced. See John viii. 42.

Verses 9, 10. *I pray for them*] For the apostles. He saw their present grief, and knew the trials to which they would be subsequently exposed, and therefore sought for them the blessing and protection of the great God. If, as is most likely, the apostles heard this prayer, it must have been to them a source of rich comfort that Jesus not only promised them his own assistance, but also interceded with his Father to afford them his omnipotent aid. And the ground on which the request was urged,—that they were his faithful followers,—was an additional consolation, inasmuch as it would yield a sweet sense of his approval, and might beget the belief that God would never forsake them. *I pray not for the world*] That is, for the unbelieving part of mankind—those who had not embraced the gospel. Our Lord is not to be understood as *refusing* to pray for these, but simply as

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are*.

saying that he did not *then* pray for them, but for his disciples exclusively. He afterward, however, prayed even for his murderers. Luke xxiii. 34. *For they are thine*] Having now become such by adoption, through faith in Christ. Our Lord here assigns one reason why he prays particularly for the apostles, another follows. *I am glorified in them*] By their propagation of the gospel: this had already been commenced, and was soon afterward most extensively and successfully preached, by their instrumentality, when he was still further "glorified."

Mr. Wesley renders the tenth verse thus:—"And all things that are mine are thine, and that are thine are mine; and I am glorified by them:" and in his note remarks as follows:—"These are very high and strong expressions, too grand for any mere creature to use; as implying that all things whatsoever, inclusive of the divine nature, perfections, and operations, are the common property of the Father and the Son." Holden, and some others, incline to a similar rendering.

Verse 11. *I am no more in the world*] Thus intimating that he was not to remain in it long, but was about to depart. These words suggest a reason for the following request. *Keep through thy name*] Meaning, either through thy power and help, or, in thy faith and service. Some render, (as in verse 12,) "*in thy name*." *Those thou hast given me*] The apostles.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name : those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition ; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

13 And now come I to thee ; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

That they may be one, &c.] Bloomfield states the sense to be, "that they may be united in sentiment, affection, and zeal for the propagation of the gospel, even as we are united in will and purpose."

Verse 12. *Those thou gavest me]* Alluding again to the apostles. *I have kept]* In the love and service of God ; this he had done by means of the instructions and grace he had imparted to them. *None is lost but the son of perdition]* The man deserving of, and appointed to, perdition or destruction ; that is, to exclusion from the kingdom of glory, and consignment to interminable punishment. Our Lord alludes to Judas Iscariot, who had apostatized, and basely and wickedly betrayed his Master, to gratify his covetousness. Thus he was irretrievably "lost !" *That the scripture might be fulfilled]* Meaning, that thus the scripture was fulfilled. See on John xiii. 18, pp. 242, 243. Comp. also Psa. cix. 8, with Acts i. 20.

Verse 13. *These things I speak in the world]* While yet in the world. The "things" alluded to are, probably, the gracious assurances of regard, support, and consolation he had given them, and especially the prayers he was now offering for them. *That they might have my joy, &c.]* The "joy" which these communications and intercessions were calculated and designed to produce, *fulfilled, or completed, in themselves :*—that they might

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

experience, in the assurance of his love and care, the greatest delight.

Verse 14. *The world hath hated them, &c.*] See on John xv. 18-21, pp. 292, 293. This want of conformity to the world may be taken as a new ground for recommending the disciples to the favour and protection of God, since they had incurred hatred on his account.

Verses 15-17. *I pray not—take them out of the world*] Or remove them from this life. *But—keep them from the evil*] Meaning either, keep them from being overcome by the evil principles and practices of the world, that so they may continue steadfast in the faith of the gospel; or else, keep them from the *power* of the evil one. Mr. Wesley renders, “keep them from the evil one”—meaning, doubtless, from falling into his snares. The former interpretation is, we think, preferable, as being more agreeable to the context. From this prayer we may learn that it is not always desirable that the Christian should be removed from scenes of suffering and trial. The buffetings with which he is sometimes visited are the discipline he requires to subject him to hearty and uniform obedience to the will of God, and tend both to his own profit and the advancement of the cause of Christ. *Sanctify them through thy truth*] The word “sanctify” has two significations: it implies, 1st, to *consecrate* or *devote* to any particular service;

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

2d, to *purify* or *make holy*. Dr. Clarke is of opinion that it is here employed in both senses. "Through thy truth," means, through the instrumentality of those instructions which Christ had communicated to them. *Thy word is truth*] The "word" alluded to is, those doctrines which Jesus had inculcated, and which he frequently declared he had received of the Father. (Verse 14.) These doctrines are termed the "truth," because they are free from all error, and contain, so far as they go, a perfect revelation of the character and will of God. In no other part of the sacred writings are there such clear exhibitions of the nature and attributes of the Most High as in the discourses of our blessed Saviour. This revelation is not given, however, merely to make known to us who and what God is, but is also designed and calculated to impress us with a sense of our obligation to him, and of the manner in which we should serve him. Thus the "word" or truth of God, as contained in the Gospels, is well fitted to "sanctify" the heart of man, by leading him to a sense of his lost condition, to repentance of sin, and to faith in Christ as his atoning sacrifice, and to unceasing effort to obtain that holiness without which no man shall see God.

Verses 18, 19. *As thou hast sent me, &c.*] Christ was sent "into the world" to *teach* the way of salvation, as well as to *open* that way by his death and subsequent intercession. He is the prophet, as well as the priest, of his dispensation. *Even so have I sent them*] That is, to carry out these designs, by publishing the gospel to mankind more extensively than he had done. *And for their*

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in

sakes] But not for theirs *exclusively*. *I sanctify myself*] "Sanctify" seems here to have the sense only of *consecrate* or *devote*; for Jesus needed not to be *purified*, since there was in him no sin: and the end of this consecration may be supposed to be, to the instruction of his disciples in the truths of religion, and his ultimate sacrificial death on the cross. *That they might be sanctified*] That through their cordial reception of this truth—that Jesus had given himself to be an atoning sacrifice for sin—they might experience the "sanctifying" or purifying influences of his grace, and be constrained to "sanctify" or devote themselves to the work of spreading the knowledge of this redemption among mankind.

Verses 20, 21. *Neither pray I for these alone*] Not for the apostles merely. *But for them that shall believe through their word*] For all who, to the end of time, will be saved through the reception of, and obedience to, the gospel preached by these apostles and the subsequent ministers of Christ. "It is matter of unspeakable joy," observes Mr. Barnes, "that each Christian can reflect he was remembered in prayer by Him whom God heareth always." *That they all may be one*] Meaning, we think, may be united in affection to each other, and in faith and love to one common Lord. This is, it is presumed, all that our Lord meant to express in this petition, as it is the highest union of which men, in this state of existence, are capable. Much has been said and written in late years in favour of the surrendering those opposing views of doctrine and government which

me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us : that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

at present exist in the Christian church, and of the banding all believers in one body, under a uniform creed and discipline. Such efforts seem to us worse than useless ; for they are not only impracticable, but, we honestly think, not desirable. Men cannot, because of the imperfection of their fallen nature, attain in this life to uniformity of opinion, and it is much better that the differences which must necessarily exist should be openly professed and generally known than that they should be disguised under a specious semblance of unity, when that union is not, and cannot be, entire and hearty. *Union of affection*, however, may, and should exist ; and the very best way for Christians to promote this, is to allow and respect each other's honest differences. *As thou art in me and I in thee, they may be one in us*] Here is the *extent* of the union with each other and with God which Christ would have to pervade his church ; it is one as close as that which subsists between the Father and himself : its nature is a conjunction in *affection, purpose, and effort*. *That the world*] The unregenerate and wicked portion of mankind. *May believe that thou hast sent me*] And consequently, that the religion of Christ is of divine institution. The mutual love which prevails among true Christians, notwithstanding their discordant opinions, is a most convincing proof that the system they profess emanated from God, and was sent from heaven. In every other matter which deeply interests the feelings of men, diversity of opinion begets, to a great extent, strife and ill-will ; but disagreement in religious belief prevents not, among real Chris-

22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

tians, the existence and profession of the clearest evidences of brotherly love. Opponents can scarcely consider this remarkable feature of the doctrines of Christ, without being convinced that such a religion is of divine origin, and well calculated to advance human happiness and promote the glory of God. Still, the truth ought not to be concealed, that in many instances professing Christians have not only failed to exhibit the principle of Christian benevolence in the manner here prayed for, but have manifested feelings of a vastly different character. Religious animosities have often kindled the martyr's pile, and saturated the earth with the blood of the brightest ornaments of the church. This conduct has been a reproach to the Christian name.

Verses 22, 23. *The glory thou gavest me*] We presume that reference is here made to the glory to which he was about to be exalted in heaven. *I have given them*] Have promised to promote them to similar honour. As Jesus is here praying, not for his immediate apostles merely, but "for them who shall believe through their word," it is reasonable to suppose, either that the past tense is employed for the future, "*I will give,*" or else that the expression has reference to his *purpose* to bestow on them the honour of adoption into the divine family, and admission into the closest intimacy with himself and the Father. *That they may be one*] That is, with God and Christ: united to them through a hearty reception of the gospel. *Even as we are one*] This cannot, strictly

24 Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

speaking, be taken of a union of *nature*, but, as before, must be understood of one of desire, of purpose, and of enjoyment. *That they may be made perfect in one*] May be perfectly united with each other and with God; who dwells in his people by the medium of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 24. *I will*] I earnestly desire, and entreat that the wish may be gratified. *That those whom thou hast given me*] Not the apostles only, but also all faithful believers in Christ. *Behold my glory*] Meaning, not only *see* it, but partake of it. The bliss of heaven is frequently expressed in this manner. In this request our Lord sought the happiness of his servants.

Verses 25, 26. *Most righteous Father*] Perhaps the sense would be rendered more apparent by translating, as some do, "most *benignant*," or, "most *gracious* Father." *The world hath not known thee*] To "know" God, in the Scriptural sense, is not only to have a just perception of his character, and of our relation to him, but also, to feel his love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us. The "world," therefore—that is, worldly-minded and unrenewed men—"know not God," because they seek not his favour, by the renunciation of sin, and the yielding up their hearts to the love and service of God. *These have known, &c.*] Spoken, probably, of the apostles. "Have known," &c., means,

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

have confidently believed this truth. Faith lends "a realizing light." *I have declared unto them thy name*] Thy nature or attributes, requirements, precepts, &c. This he had done, in some respects, during the whole course of his ministry; but more fully and clearly toward its close. *Will declare it*] Will still further make it known. This he did, after his resurrection, both in person and by his Holy Spirit. *That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them*] May be extended to and enjoyed by them. The full sense of the passage seems to be, I have declared, and will yet further declare unto them, thy nature, character, and will, that they may be thus led to love and serve thee, and that thou mayest, consistently with the perfection of thy character, be enabled to extend unto them the love wherewith thou hast regarded me. God can regard with favour those only who are united to Christ by faith, and are striving to glorify him in their souls and bodies. *I in them*] By the indwelling of the Holy Ghost—the Mediator, Counsellor, and Comforter. This was not a privilege peculiar to the apostles, but is common to all Christians. 1 Cor. iii. 16; 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Reader, does he dwell in thee?

LESSON XIX.

[A. D. 29.]

Christ goes to the garden of Gethsemane—Again predicts Peter's denial of him—His agony in the garden.
—Matt. xxvi. 30–46; Mark xiv. 26–42; Luke xxii. 39–46; John xviii. 1, 2.

JOHN xviii. 1, 2.

WHEN Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where

NOTES ON JOHN xviii. 1, 2.*

Verse 1. *When Jesus had spoken these words*] After he had finished the prayer recorded John xvii.; though, perhaps, not *immediately* thereafter, for Matthew and Mark represent our Lord as singing a hymn or psalm before he left the room in which he had eaten the pass-over. Matt. xxvi. 30; Mark xiv. 26. *He went forth—over the brook Cedron*] The valley of the Cedron or Kidron, now generally called the valley of Jehoshaphat, commences on the north-west of Jerusalem, about a mile from the city. For some distance—perhaps two-thirds of a mile—it runs nearly east and west; it then turns to the south, and separates Jerusalem from the mount of Olives. In this part of its course the ravine is deep:—Professor Robinson states (*Biblical Researches*, vol. i, p. 398) that near St. Stephen's gate, (the only one now open in the eastern wall,) the bottom of the valley is about one hundred feet below the level of the surface

* Mr. Townsend, in his arrangement, places these two verses immediately after Matt. xxvi. 35; the compiler could not readily adopt this arrangement, and has therefore permitted them to stand in close connection with the record of John directly preceding.

was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place; for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples.

above, and its western side very precipitous:—the eastern one we presume to be less so. This is the bed of “the brook Cedron” of the text, which is probably nothing more than a winter torrent. Remarking on this “brook,” Dr. Robinson says, “No stream flows here now, except during the heavy rains of winter, when the waters descend into it from the neighbouring hills. Yet even in winter there is no constant flow. Nor is there any evidence that there was anciently more water in it than at present.”—Vol. i, p. 402. *Where was a garden, into which he entered*] From Matt. xxvi. 36 it appears that this “garden” was called Gethsemane: and from Luke xxii. 39 we learn that it was somewhere on the mount of Olives. Tradition has fixed on a small enclosure near the foot of the mount as the “Gethsemane” of the Scriptures, but there is no certainty that this is the spot. Robinson says, “the spot was not improbably fixed upon during the visit of Helena* to Jerusalem, A. D. 326. Before that time no such tradition is alluded to.”—Vol. i, p. 346. The *supposed* site is thus described:—“It is a plot of ground nearly square, enclosed by an ordinary stone wall. The north-west corner is one hundred and forty-five feet distant from the bridge [which crosses the vale of Cedron.] The west side measures one hundred and sixty feet in length; and the north side one hundred and fifty. Within this enclosure are eight very old olive trees. There is nothing peculiar in this place to mark it as Gethsemane, for adjacent to it are other similar encl-

* Mother of Constantine the Great.

MATT. xxvi. 31-46.

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night, for it is written, I will smite

sures, and many olive trees equally old."—*Ibid.* From the second verse of this chapter we learn that Gethsemane was a spot to which Jesus and his disciples often resorted—probably as affording them a convenient place of retirement from the throng and publicity of the city: and also, that Judas "knew the place:" meaning, probably, not only that he knew where it was, but that he knew Christ was in the habit of frequenting it. This statement is made to account for the ease with which Judas found him. We now turn to Matthew xxvi. 31-46, wherein we are informed of the prediction, by Christ, that he would, after his resurrection, go into Galilee; of the third prediction that Peter would that night deny his Master; and of our Lord's agony in the garden.

MATT. xxvi. 31-46.

Verse 31. *Then saith Jesus unto them*] To the apostles. It is probable that this conversation took place while on the way to Gethsemane. *All ye shall be offended because of me, &c.*] Meaning, will to-night turn away from, or forsake me, on account of that which will come upon me. The Saviour alludes, in this remark, to his own arrest, and the subsequent desertion of him by the apostles. *For it is written*] It is predicted, and recorded in Zech. xiii. 7. The prediction had no effect, however, on the minds of the apostles; their desertion was in no sense *caused* by it, but was simply a *confirmation* of it; though the manner in which the prophecy is referred to shows that our Lord regarded it as having its

the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

proper fulfilment in their *scattering*. *I will smite the Shepherd*] "Smite" has the sense of *kill*. By a comparison of Matt. xxvi. 31 with Zech. xiii. 7, it will be seen that our Lord does not quote the entire prophecy, but, as was customary with him and the public teachers generally, merely gives so much of the passage as suited his present purpose, and even that not literally, but substantially. The "Shepherd" referred to is evidently the Lord Jesus Christ, as appears both from his appropriating the prediction to himself, and from the august title by which the "Shepherd" is designated in Zech. xiii. 7—the "fellow" of Jehovah. The pronoun I—"I will smite," &c.,—is to be understood of God, who not only *suffered* the implacable enemies of Christ to work their vengeance on him, (and God is frequently said to do that which he only permits to be done,) but actually *appointed* and *brought about* his death. He visited on Jesus, as the substitute for guilty man, that degree of punishment which the honour of his violated law required, according to the statement of the prophet—"The Lord *laid on him* the iniquity of us all;" "and by his stripes we" who truly believe in him "are healed." Yet the Jews are not free from the charge of being the murderers of Christ; for though their act accomplished the divine purpose, that act was entirely voluntary and free on their part, and proceeded from the indulgence of the most revengeful hatred. They are therefore justly accounted guilty. *The sheep shall be scattered*] By "sheep," here, the apostles are meant; who all, on the apprehension of Christ, "forsook him and fled." Verse 56.

32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended.

34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That

Verse 32. *I will go before you into Galilee*] The *object* of this appointment is not stated, though it doubtless was that he might, by an open, personal manifestation of himself, give satisfactory proof to all his disciples that he was indeed risen from the dead: and the reason why Galilee was chosen for this purpose may be presumed to have been, that that province had been the principal scene of his ministerial labours, and contained the greater portion of his followers. Although no particular place of meeting is here mentioned, we know, from Matt. xxviii. 16, that one was appointed; indeed, this precaution would be necessary, as Galilee is probably not less than sixty miles long by thirty wide.

Verse 33. *Peter answered, Though all men should be offended*] The word "men" is not in the original, but is improperly added by our translators. It mars the sense: for Peter spake not of *all men*, but of his companions the apostles. *Yet will I never*] I will never forsake thee. Peter was prompted to this assertion by the impetuosity of his disposition, and the ardour of his love to Christ. There can be no question that he was sincere in his profession, and felt fully determined to adhere to his Master at all hazards. But he knew not his own weakness, nor the power of strong temptation or sudden fear upon over-confident and unwatchful minds.

Verse 34. *Jesus said, This night, before the cock crow*] Mark (xiv. 30) says, "before the cock crow *twice*

this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called

There are two periods of the night in which it is usual for cocks to crow; one at about twelve o'clock, the other a short time before break of day. The latter is the most general; and the phrase "at cock-crowing" was not unfrequently employed to point out this particular hour: indeed, the Jews used the term to designate one of the watches into which they divided the night. See Mark xiii. 35. It is to this later, or second crowing, only, that Matthew, Luke, and John refer; Mark mentions both. There is consequently no contradiction between the evangelists, though Mark's account is in this instance more particular than is that of either of the others. *Thou shalt deny me thrice*] That is, will three times deny "that thou knowest me." Luke xxii. 34. This is the third and last prediction of this denial. Perhaps it may not be amiss to remind the reader, that our Lord's knowledge and declaration had no controlling influence upon Peter. It might be supposed that it would have had the effect of making him guarded and watchful; but the result proved that it exercised no influence whatever either to cause or hinder his rash and cowardly denial.

Verse 35. *Though I should die—I will not deny thee*] Mark tells us that this assertion was made "vehemently." It is certainly strong language, and forcibly expresses the strength of Peter's attachment to Christ. Rather than deny him, he would die! So, also, said they all.

Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

Verses 36, 37. *Then cometh Jesus unto Gethsemane*] He had now arrived at Gethsemane. This name is thought to signify *the place of oil presses*, and is supposed to have been given it because of its having been a place where presses for the extraction of oil from the olive had been erected. *Sit ye here, &c.*] As the "garden" was not, in all probability, of very great extent, we may reasonably imagine that these disciples were seated not far from the entrance. The spot to which our Lord went for prayer was probably further in, and more retired than that where the eight apostles were directed to remain. *He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee*] James and John. As on two prior occasions he had favoured these disciples by selecting them to be the witnesses of his power and glory,—namely, at his restoring to life the daughter of Jairus (Luke viii. 51) and at his transfiguration, (Matt. xvii. 1, 2,)—so now he chose them to be the most confidential witnesses of his humiliation and agony. *Began to be sorrowful and very heavy*] Mark expresses it, (xiv. 33,) "sore amazed, and very heavy." These expressions denote deep depression and acute anguish. The cause of this overwhelming sorrow is not stated, and cannot, therefore, be positively determined. Some have thought that it arose from a natural shrinking from a death of so much suffering and ignominy; but this could not have been its cause, for Christ had ever looked upon and spoken of the circumstances of his death with calmness, and when called to die, he met "the last enemy" with composure. Others

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face,

have supposed that he was now assaulted with sudden and powerful temptations by Satan, and that this caused his anguish. But this cause, even allowing it to have existed, would be, we think, altogether inadequate to produce the effect here exhibited. There seems but one mode of satisfactorily accounting for the *agony* he endured;—namely, that he was now, as the substitute for a guilty world, undergoing the penalty which inflexible justice demanded, in consideration of the dishonour cast upon God's violated law. This punishment was inflicted by the divine Being—not, as some have impiously imagined, in wrath with the innocent victim, but with that stern, unrelenting determination to vindicate the honour of the divine rule and government, before extending favour, which must necessarily mark the administration of a perfect sovereign.

Verse 38. *Saith he unto them*] To Peter, James, and John. *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*] Meaning, oppressed by sorrow sufficient to cause death. It would seem that our Lord's human nature could not long have endured the agony he suffered, but must have sunk under it, unless miraculously sustained. *Tarry here, and watch with me*] It does not clearly appear what was our Lord's motive for this command; perhaps he either wished them to mark his sufferings, that so they might be more deeply impressed with the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the inflexible justice of God in its punishment, or that their faith might be confirmed by the sight of the "angel" ministering to him.

and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me : nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Verse 39. *He went a little further*] A little further into the "garden;" Luke says, (xxii. 41,) about a stone's cast. *And fell on his face, and prayed*] Luke says, "he kneeled down." It is not unlikely that our Lord at first knelt, but that, as his agony increased, he prostrated himself on his face to the ground. *If—possible*] Meaning, if "possible" consistently with the scheme devised for the redemption of man. Luke (xxii. 42) has it, "if thou be willing." *Let this cup pass from me*] Luke writes, "*remove* this cup." In Scripture, the lot or portion appointed to man is frequently termed his *cup*; (see, for instance, Psalm xi. 6;) and by that term here we are to understand the bitter anguish and unspeakable sufferings which *now* oppressed the Saviour. The reason of our Lord's request may have been, that he feared such suffering would be more than he could long endure. Some, indeed, take the word "cup" to denote, here, death; and understand Christ to pray that, if it were possible, he might be delivered from death; but this gives a very indifferent sense, and is opposed to the purpose for which he had avowedly come up to Jerusalem. The record which Mark has preserved of this prayer (xiv. 36) seems, at first sight, to differ essentially from the statements of both the other evangelists:—"Father, *all things are possible unto thee*: take away this cup from me." There is here, however, no real difficulty; for, in one sense, "all things are possible unto God," he having the power to do whatever he will: though in another sense all are not possible, since he cannot do any thing that is not wise and proper. We

are therefore to understand the Saviour as asserting, that it is possible for God to do all things not inconsistent with the perfection of his character, and on this is based the petition to "take away this cup,"—that is, if it would be right for him so to do. Thus it appears that the sense of Mark's record is the same with that of Matthew. It may be thought, that because Christ speaks as though he were *ignorant* of the possibility or impossibility of removing the "cup" of suffering from him, he in reality was so; but this would be a wrong assumption, for, as Mr. Watson justly remarks, "he indeed knew all things, yet now, being in the place of the sinner, he would not be the judge in his own cause, but honoured the justice of the Father by leaving that strict attribute to exact all that was necessary for the manifestation of its own purity, while at the same time he appealed to the divine compassion. He therefore adds, 'Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt;' yielding himself with absolute submission to the divine appointment, and affording us in a state of suffering, as in all other circumstances, a perfect example, that we, in our measure, by the aids of his powerful grace, should 'tread in his steps.'"

According to Paul, (Heb. v. 7,) our Lord's supplications on this occasion were offered up with "strong crying and tears," an expression indicative of deep feeling and earnest desire: nor was his "prayer" in vain, for the same high authority assures us that he "was heard in that he feared;" or, as the learned say the passage may be rendered, (and which we prefer, as giving a clearer sense,) "was delivered from his fear;"—that is, from the "sore amazement and heaviness" (Mark) which afflicted him. But there is also other evidence that he "was heard;" for Luke states, (xxii. 43,) "there appeared an

angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him:" by which miraculous support his physical nature was enabled to endure all that inflexible justice saw proper to lay on him. Yet, though assisted thus, it would seem that he was but *barely able* to sustain the anguish which oppressed him: for Luke tells us, (xxii. 44,) that "being in an *agony*, he prayed the more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." The term "*agony*" indicates a very powerful conflict:—one in which the most desperate and determined efforts are put forth for the mastery. He apparently strove with all his might to bear up under the punishment which, as the substitute for guilty man, the Lord God laid upon him. The declaration that "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood," &c., is probably to be understood as importing that, by his extreme suffering, blood, which had burst from the smaller vessels, was forced through the pores of the body, and mixed with and coloured the profuse perspiration, which fell in great drops to the ground.

"It may seem strange," observes Mr. Barnes, "that, since Jesus was divine, the divine nature did not minister strength to the human, and that he that was God should receive strength from an angel. It should be remembered that Jesus assumed human nature not only to make an atonement, but to be a perfect example of a holy man; that as such it was necessary he should submit to the common conditions of humanity; that he should live as other men, be sustained as other men, suffer as other men, and be strengthened as other men. Hence he met trials as a man; he received comfort as a man; and there is no absurdity in supposing that, in accordance with the condition of his people, his human nature, as well as

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What! could ye not watch with me one hour?

theirs, should be strengthened by those who are sent forth to be 'ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation.'" Heb. i. 14.

Verses 40, 41. *He cometh unto the disciples*] To the three whom he had selected as his more immediate companions on this occasion, and who had been left at a little distance. The *object* of this visit to the three is not stated; probably it was that he might, by communion with them, obtain some respite from his sorrow. *Findeth them asleep*] This drowsiness was, according to Luke xxii. 45, occasioned by "sorrow:" and may have been a purely natural occurrence; for it is certain that excessive grief does sometimes produce stupefaction and lethargy, by exhausting the animal spirits and strength. Still, we cannot divest ourself of the belief that something more than natural causes induced this effect: for it does not appear that the apostles had been sufficiently excited to warrant the opinion that this torpor was the necessary result of overwrought feeling. *Saith unto Peter*] Luke, with less particularity, represents Christ as speaking to the three disciples in common; and doubtless his remarks were meant for all, though especially addressed to one. Mark agrees, substantially, with Matthew. It is suggested by the commentators that Jesus chose to address himself to Peter because of the boast he had so recently made. Verse 35. *Could ye not watch with me one hour?*] The expression "one hour" is not to be understood strictly of the period of time so designated, but is to be taken in the sense of *a little while*—a space more or less than an hour. *Watch*

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation : the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.

and pray, that ye enter not into temptation] To “enter into temptation,” is so to fall in with it as to be overcome by it. *Not to enter*, then, is to resist and overcome it. In this remark the Saviour has, probably, allusion to the severe trials which were about to come upon the apostles, growing out of the apprehension and execution of their Master. It is not improbable that, had they obeyed his directions, and suitably “watched and prayed,” they would have been saved from the shameful desertion of which they were guilty, and from those accusations of conscience which must have followed that act of cowardice. We may learn, from our Lord’s injunction, that the union of these Christian duties is essential to the right performance of either of them. Watching, unaccompanied by prayer, is *presumption*; prayer, divested of watchfulness, is *mockery*: and the only way for the Christian to avoid “entering into temptation” to do wrong is, continually to watch *and* pray. *The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak]* The willingness of spirit, here alluded to, is probably to be understood of the will or disposition the apostles had to be faithful to Christ; and the weakness of the flesh, may denote their liability to fall from him on the approach of imminent danger. There can be no doubt that these disciples were ardently attached to Jesus, and entertained the fullest resolves to encounter every hazard for his sake; but their subsequent conduct strikingly exemplified the truth of our Lord’s remark, that though their “spirit” was willing, their “flesh” was weak. We may learn from this, that it is only by the impartation of divine aid that the Christian

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them asleep again : for their eyes were heavy.

can certainly stand in the day of trial. Commentators are not agreed whether this declaration was designed to act as an incentive to greater vigilance and prayer on the part of the apostles, or whether it is made as an affectionate apology for the weakness they so soon manifested. We incline to the former opinion, though both senses may be included.

Verse 42. *If this cup may not pass away, except, &c.*] As though he had said, If there be no way of procuring salvation for sinners but by my enduring this load of suffering, let me suffer. There is here no complaint—no murmuring ; but an earnest solicitation (though with the fullest acquiescence in the pleasure of the great Arbitrator) that, if less of suffering would atone for sin, he might be graciously spared further bruising. But the cup *did not ultimately* pass—a proof that less of penal infliction was not deemed a sufficient atonement for the wrong done to the divine law. What an image is thus presented of the inflexibility of the divine justice :—God could not spare, though the sufferer were his own Son !

Verse 43. *He came and found them asleep again*] On which, as we may infer from Mark xiv. 40, he awoke them. But why did he arouse his disciples ? We know not positively, but think he probably did it for one or all of the following reasons :—1st., That they might, by watchfulness, be prepared to resist and overcome the dangers which were around them ; 2d., That they might be deeply impressed by the suffering he was evidently

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

enduring; 3d., That he might, by communing with them, relieve his heart of a measure of its load, or be encouraged and comforted by their converse and their prayers. *Their eyes were heavy*] They were overcome by sleep.

Verse 44. *He prayed the third time, saying the same words*] The petition in each case was the same, as were also the expressions of meek resignation by which it was accompanied: but it would seem that the intensity of his feelings was heightened at each successive prayer. Luke xxii. 44. It was probably at this "third time" of prayer that the angel mentioned by Luke came and strengthened him. Christ's using "the same words" each of the three times he prayed on this memorable night shows that the frequent presentation of the same request, in the same language, is not necessarily "a vain repetition;" and that the prohibition recorded Matt. vi. 7 does not apply to such cases.

Verses 45, 46. *Sleep on now, &c.*] As these words *seem* to be irreconcilable with the command recorded in the verse following, it has been thought by some that they were spoken interrogatively—So ye still sleep? But it is perhaps better to take them in a permissive sense; as though Jesus had said, You may now (for all the service you can render me) sleep on; the struggle is over; behold, the hour of my being delivered up is at hand. *Let us be going*] To rejoin the other apostles.

47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with

Verse 47. *While he yet spake*] Mark says, "*immediately, while he yet spake.*" *Judas, one of the twelve, came*] Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve apostles. It will be recollected that while Jesus was engaged with his disciples in celebrating the passover supper, (or perhaps, more strictly speaking, immediately on the conclusion of that ceremony, but before our Lord had instituted his own commemorative rite,) this man left the company, repaired to the sanhedrim, and completed with them the arrangements for the seizure of Christ's person. He was now just arrived from that body, prepared to accomplish his nefarious purpose. *With him a great multitude*] A large portion of this "great multitude" consisted, in all probability, of private citizens, who had been induced to join in the enterprise by the "officers" (John xviii. 3) of the sanhedrim. The manner in which many of them were armed—with clubs—forbids the supposition of their belonging to the regular force; though some of the party were undoubtedly attached to the temple guard. Be this, however, as it may, the "multitude" was not a tumultuary body, but, as appears from the close of the verse, and especially from Mark xiv. 43, one collected and employed on this business by the authority of the sanhedrim; who (judging from the number of the party) entertained some fears of an attempt being made to rescue Jesus from their power. It is suggested by Kuinoel that the populace engaged in the undertaking did not generally know who was to be apprehended. As yet there is no appearance of the employment of Roman troops. *With swords and staves*] Rather, swords and clubs. The original here rendered

swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

"staves" is a different word from that so translated Matt. x. 10, Luke ix. 3, and, as the context shows, is intended to point out a weapon: hence "club" better expresses the thing meant than does the word "staff," which with us denotes a walking-stick. John, in his description of this company, states that they also carried "lanterns and torches." As the moon was now about full, we know not how to account for this unless by supposing that "the garden" was thickly wooded, and that the shade occasioned by the foliage of the trees made it somewhat difficult to distinguish one man from another, and that they took this precaution lest they should seize the wrong person. The annexed cuts, representing a Persian lantern and Syrian torch, are taken from Kitto's Pictorial Bible.*



* "It is very probable that the lanterns at this time in use were such as are still common in Western Asia. The construction is at once simple and ingenious, and well calculated for diffusing a

48 Now, he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; hold him fast.

Verse 48. *Gave them a sign*] Mark says, "*had given* them a token." The probability is, that this signal had been agreed on between Judas and the "officers" either before, or immediately subsequent to, their leaving the sanhedrim. *Whom I shall kiss*] A "kiss" is, with us, an expression of affection or love, and such was once, probably, its universal character; though it has degenerated, in the East, into the sign of a mere friendly greeting, or a customary mark of reverence toward a superior. *That same is he*] He whom they were to arrest—his much-injured Master. It would seem from this that the "officers" were either altogether ignorant of the person of Christ, or not sufficiently acquainted with him readily to recognise him in the shade of the garden: hence Judas fixes on this token as a means of pointing Christ out to them. *Hold him fast*] Mark's record is, (Mark xiv. 44,) "take him, and lead him away safely." Perhaps Judas

large body of light. It consists of a round top and bottom of tinned copper—the former furnished with a handle, and the latter with a stand for the candle—between which a cylinder of waxed cloth, or even of white paper, is extended over rings of wire. When rested on the ground, it assumes the appearance and relative dimensions shown in [the centre] cut, the cloth cylinder and rings being pressed or folded down between the bottom and the cover, so that the candle, which rests on the bottom and rises through an opening left in the cover, remains exposed, as if in a very broad-bottomed candlestick. In this state, if a person takes it by the cover to take it up, the cloth cylinder becomes extended or unfolded, [as shown in the outer cut,] and, while carried along, the weight of the lower part still keeps it in this state of extension. Lanterns of this sort are generally from two to three feet in length, by about nine inches in diameter."—*Pictorial Bible*.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed him.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou

thought that as Jesus had on other occasions supernaturally delivered himself out of the hand of the Jews when they sought his life, he might attempt to do so now: and therefore gave those strict orders for his retention.

Verses 49, 50. *Forthwith he came to Jesus*] Advancing (Luke xxii. 47) before the multitude. *Hail, Master*] The word "hail," as here used, is a joyous greeting, and was designed by Judas to convey the idea of his being glad at being restored to the society of Jesus. What a sad picture does this scene present of the depravity of the human heart, and of the deceitfulness which wicked men sometimes practise! They

"— smile, and smile, and murder while they smile."

Friend, wherefore art thou come] There are two words in the Greek which our translators have indifferently rendered *friend*, thereby destroying, to the English reader, the distinction which the original language preserves. One of these words implies attachment or regard, and is therefore properly translated *friend*; the other is merely a civil appellation, made use of in addressing a stranger or slight acquaintance, and does not necessarily imply either esteem or affection. The word here rendered "friend" is of the latter class: and is applied, Matt. xx. 13, to the disaffected labourer in the parable of the vineyard, and, in Matt. xxii. 12, to the man destitute, at the marriage feast, of a wedding garment. Perhaps the *sense* of the original would be better preserved by the use of the word *neighbour*, or companion, than by that of "friend." We are not, therefore, to suppose

come? Then came they and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

that our Lord sacrifices sincerity to courtesy. The question, "Wherefore art thou come?" was probably designed to arouse Judas to a consideration of his course: and is not to be understood as implying ignorance of the traitor's intention. See John xviii. 4. Luke informs us, (xxii. 48,) that on Judas's kissing Christ, our Lord further said to him, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" We cannot conceive any other plausible reason for this most searching inquiry, than an earnest desire to arouse the conscience of the offender to a sense of his guilt, in order that proper penitence might be awakened in his bosom. But, alas! the effort seems to have been fruitless, the heart of Judas being "fully set in him to do evil." Miserable man! From John xviii. 4, 5, it appears that Jesus advanced toward and interrogated the multitude as to the object of their visit: "Whom seek ye?" said he. To which they answered, (probably one of the "officers" made the reply,) "Jesus of Nazareth." "I," said the Saviour, "am he." Upon this announcement, we are told that "they went backward," or reeled, "and fell to the ground." This effect was doubtless produced by the special agency of Christ, who, to demonstrate both to them, and to his followers in all ages, that they had no power over him, otherwise than as he chose to submit himself to them, exerted an invisible influence over them, and completely bereft them, for the moment, of the ability to harm him. He then (probably after their recovery from their consternation) again inquired of them whom they sought, and received the same answer as before—"Jesus of Nazareth." Upon this he repeated the assur-

51 And behold one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear.

ance that he was that person, and added, "If, therefore, ye seek me, let these"—meaning the apostles—"go their way:" hereby showing his care for them even in his own greatest extremity. In thus providing for and securing the safety of the apostles, John tells us that Christ illustrated and proved the declaration he had made, (John xvii. 12,) "Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none." *Laid hands on Jesus*] Arrested him—took him prisoner.

Verse 51. *One of them which were with Jesus drew his sword*] John tells us (xviii. 10) that this was Peter. Neither of the first three evangelists state who it was, probably because Peter was still living when they wrote, and they might deem it improper to reveal the author of the act, lest he should be troubled. When John wrote, however, Peter was beyond the reach of his enemies, having won the martyr's crown; there was not, therefore, any longer a necessity for the suppression of the name, and it was accordingly given to the church. From Luke xxii. 49 it appears, that before Peter drew his sword, some of the apostles, apprehensive, from the movements of those who had come to arrest Jesus, for the safety of their Master, and probably recollecting the remark he had made in the supper room, that he who had no sword should buy one, (Luke xxii. 36,) which observation they erroneously supposed justified them in the present use of physical force, eagerly inquired, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" But seemingly before an answer could be given, the impetuous Peter attacked a servant of the high priest, named Malchus, and cut off his right ear. John xviii. 10.

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

From Luke xxii. 51 we learn that our Lord hereupon interfered, staying the resistance of his followers by saying to them, "Suffer ye thus far;" meaning, according to Bloomfield, Ye have gone far enough—no more of this—and immediately "touched" the ear of the servant, "and healed him:" probably by reuniting the severed parts. This act furnishes a beautiful instance of the mild and merciful character of Christ, as well as of his power.

It is not likely that the apostles *usually* went armed, but that on account of the dangers attendant on journeying about the times of the great feasts, they had, before coming to Jerusalem, prudently provided themselves with a couple of swords (Luke xxii. 38) wherewith to defend themselves, if needful, against the many robbers who infested the country, and who were particularly active at these seasons.

Verse 52. *Said Jesus unto him*] To Peter; whom he reproves, in the following words, for having assaulted Malchus. *They that take the sword shall perish with the sword*] Meaning, probably, that in general those who have recourse to violence will be likely to perish by violence. The remark may also be understood as teaching that not only was his life not to be defended by the employment of physical force, but further, that his cause was not to be promoted by such means. Our Lord is not to be understood, however, as inveighing against the proper enforcement of magisterial rule, for his Spirit has declared that the magistrate "bears not the sword in vain," but as "a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Rom. xiii. 4.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

Verses 53, 54. *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray, &c.*] Equivalent to asserting that he could so pray, and that his Father would immediately give him "more than twelve legions of angels" for his defence. "Legion" was a term used to designate a division of the Roman army, consisting, at this time, of rather more than six thousand men. It hence came to denote, in common parlance, a large number of beings. See Mark v. 9. We presume Christ used the phrase "twelve legions" simply to denote that he could command the services of a very large number, more or less than the amount named, of these spiritual ministers, if he saw fit, and consequently there was no need of Peter's having recourse to the sword for his protection. *How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, &c.*] Implying, that if he availed himself of the aid of the angelic hosts, the scriptures, which had expressly predicted his death, (see Isa. liii.; Dan. ix. 24-27; and elsewhere,) would not be fulfilled. "By thus referring to the declarations of the prophets, our Lord," says Mr. Watson, "placed a support beneath the faith of his disciples, which might otherwise have been fatally shaken by the occurrences which followed." The expression, "thus it must be," is probably not to be understood as referring to the *manner* of his arrest and death, but simply as declaring the fact that he must die.

John (xviii. 11) represents Christ as saying, also, "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"—a phrase expressive of his resolution to submit

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the

himself fully to the divine appointment, and not to exert any power or influence to deliver himself from his enemies.

Verses 55, 56. *In that same hour*] At that time—there and then. *Jesus said, Are ye come out as against a thief, &c.*] This would seem to be meant, by Christ, as a reproof of the “officers” for having taken the needless precautions they had in arming themselves and followers for his arrest; and which they could not have surpassed had they known him to be one of the most violent and reckless of persons, disposed to resist the civil authority to the utmost. While he patiently submitted to be taken, he expressed indignation at the *manner* of his apprehension. *I sat daily, &c.*] This he had done for the last four days, appearing among them in the most public manner, yet had no one “laid hold on him”—that is, arrested him: but now he is sought after secretly, under cover of night, and proceeded against as though he were a felon. *But all this was done, &c.*] These words seem, in the common translation, to be a remark of the evangelist; “but it is perhaps better,” says Holden, “to take them as the words of Jesus, and to render them, ‘But all this *is* done, that the scriptures,’ &c.” See also Mark xiv. 49. “Scriptures of the prophets” means, the *writings* of the prophets. The reference is to the prophetic declarations concerning the death of Christ recorded in the Old Testament.

According to Luke xxii. 53, our Lord further added,

prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

“But this is your hour, and the power of darkness;”—meaning, that at this time God had left Satan and the malicious Jews at liberty to follow out their wicked plans for his destruction. The restraints with which the Almighty usually environs wicked men and demons, so that they *cannot* work all the evil they would, appear to have been, so far as Christ was concerned, greatly lessened, and the consequence was, they brought about his death. “What a comfortable thought is it to the followers of Christ,” observes Dr. A. Clarke, “that neither men nor demons can act against them but by the permission of their heavenly Father, and that he will not suffer any of those who trust in him to be tempted above what they are able to bear.” *All the disciples forsook him, &c.*] This was probably under the influence of sudden and overpowering fear and disappointment, at seeing him so completely in the power of his enemies. Some of them, however, if not all, must have speedily recovered, at least partially, from their dread, for Peter and another disciple (probably John) are known to have followed him, even into the palace of the high priest; their love to Christ inducing them to make an effort to learn the result of the matter, though possibly at some personal hazard.

LESSON XX.

[A. D. 30.]

Christ arrested, and led first to Annas and then to Caiaphas, by whom he is examined and condemned—Peter and another disciple follow, and obtain access to the high-priest's palace, where Peter denies all knowledge of Christ.—Matt. xxvi. 57-75; Mark xiv. 51-72; Luke xxii. 54-65; John xviii. 12-27.

JOHN xviii. 12-24.

THEN the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews, took Jesus, and bound him,

13 And led him away to Annas first: (for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.)

NOTES ON JOHN xviii. 12-24.

Verses 12, 13. *Took Jesus, and bound him*] This act does not seem to have been the result of special malignity, but was, apparently, the usual course pursued toward accused persons. See Acts ix. 2; xii. 6. *Led him—to Annas*] The reason of this procedure is not stated. It may be that the rulers were at first uncertain what disposition to make of Jesus, should they obtain possession of his person; and they may have therefore directed the captain of the band to convey him to the house of Annas, and there await further orders. Or, they may have feared their plan to arrest Christ might become known to the people, and they assemble at the palace of the high-priest and attempt his rescue; in which view the taking him first to the house of Annas would seem to have been a precautionary measure, having for its object the securing of Christ. There being, however, no tumult, Annas, as we learn from the 24th verse, directed that the prisoner should be at once conveyed

14 Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

to the palace of the high priest, where the sanhedrim were assembled (Matt. xxvi. 57, Mark xiv. 53) awaiting his arrival. It is not unlikely that the whole plan of arrest had been devised by Annas, who is represented by Josephus to have been a man of great influence; had been high-priest many years, and had been honoured by having five sons fill that dignified station, which was now held by his son-in-law. *Caiaphas—was high priest that same year*] The evangelist is not to be understood as intimating, by this declaration, that Caiaphas had been but recently appointed to the office of high priest, for he had now held it some five years; and we have Scriptural authority for stating him to have possessed it upward of three years. See Luke iii. 2; also, note, vol. i, p. 155, &c. The high priesthood was originally held during life, unless the incumbent were guilty of some high offence, which rendered him unfit for the office; (so Solomon removed Abiathar for having treasonably engaged in the conspiracy with Adonijah, 1 Kings ii. 27;) but of late years it was held during the pleasure of the Roman authority. Caiaphas is supposed to have enjoyed the dignity about ten years in all.

Verse 14. *Caiaphas—was he which gave counsel that one man should die for the people*] This was during the debate which took place in the sanhedrim on the resurrection of Lazarus. (See note on John xi. 49–51, vol. iii, p. 377.) It is plausibly suggested by Tittman, that the evangelist's reason for making reference to this advice of Caiaphas was, to show that Jesus was taken, not before an impartial judge, but before one who had

15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and *so did* another disciple. That disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

already counselled his death, as furnishing the only probable means of safety to the nation.

Verses 15, 16. *Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple*] Not, indeed, in his train, for immediately on his arrest "all the disciples forsook him and fled:" but some little time afterward, when the consternation consequent on that event had somewhat subsided, and their wonted courage had returned to them. He may thus be said, according to Matt. xxvi. 58, to have followed his Master "afar off." He seems to have been accompanied by "another disciple." Who this "other disciple" was cannot be determined. Most commentators suppose him to have been John; but others think it could not be he, inasmuch as the disciple here mentioned was "known unto the high priest," which they think John, being a Galilean, would not be likely to be. Mark, also, tells us that "there followed him [Jesus] a certain young man having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men [who came to arrest Christ] laid hold on him. And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked," in order, apparently, to escape arrest. (It was, probably, with the design of showing that the band would have arrested not only the Master, but his followers also, had they not fled, that this incident is mentioned.) It is as uncertain who this "young man" was, as it is who was the "other disciple" who accompanied Peter; and opinion is much divided whether or not he was the same person. The "linen cloth" he wore was probably a loose garment thrown over his inner clothing. The expressions, "*naked*

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter,

body," and "he fled *naked,*" do not mean that he was left without any clothing, but simply that he was, by the loss of "the linen cloth," reduced to the tight underdress, reaching from the shoulders to the knees, which the Orientals usually wear. Persons divested of their upper garment—"cloak" or mantle—were said to be naked. It is in this sense that 1 Sam. xix. 24. Isa. xx. 2, 3, and similar passages, are to be understood.

On arriving at the high priest's, Peter's companion, being known, went in, but Peter "stood at the door without." The word here rendered "palace" is the same as that which in Luke xxii. 55 is translated "hall," and properly signifies the court or yard of the house. This, in Asiatic dwellings, is usually an open space in the centre of the building, around which the different rooms are grouped, and with which they communicate on the lower story by doors opening immediately into the court, while those above open on a balcony, which is connected with the yard by a flight of stairs. Robinson says, this court "serves as a place for the reception of company," &c. *That other disciple spake to her that kept the door, and brought in Peter*] From which it appears that his object in speaking to her was, to obtain her consent to the admission of his fellow-disciple.

Verse 17. *Then said the damsel, &c.*] The question thus introduced was not, probably, put immediately on Peter's entrance into the *aulen*, or "hall," but some time after, when he and others were assembled around the

Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; (for it was cold;) and they warmed

fire which had been kindled: (see Mark xiv. 54; Luke xxii. 55, 56 :) and perhaps after the examination of Christ had somewhat progressed. *Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?*] The use of the word "also," here, would seem to intimate that the "other disciple"—he he who he might—was known to the woman to be a follower of Jesus; and as he interceded for the admission of Peter, she might very naturally conclude that the latter was one likewise, especially as the hour—now, perhaps, about two o'clock in the morning—and the comparative privacy of the arrest, would both strengthen the supposition that no indifferent person would be present at so unseasonable a time. The woman's question was probably one of mere curiosity, not the offspring of an evil intention. *He saith, I am not*] A most unqualified falsehood! This was Peter's first denial of Christ; and probably sprang from his fear of being recognised to be he who assaulted Malchus, as stated in the tenth verse. Shortly after this denial he left the fire, and, according to Mark xiv. 68, "went out into the porch," or passage which led from the court to the street door. This was probably to avoid notice, and so escape further inquiry. Mark also informs us that then "the cock crew." See further on Matt. xxvi. 69-75, pp. 374-377.

Verse 18. *The officers and servants stood there*] In the *aulen*, or court. *Who had made a fire of coals*] That is, of charcoal; pit coal is not anywhere used in the East. As chimneys are but little known in Palestine, charcoal is extensively used for warming apart-

themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warned himself.

19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

ments; and is usually burned in pans of metal or earthenware. *It was cold*] This was on or about the fourth of April; at which season the nights at Jerusalem are generally chilly, and sometimes quite cold. Lightfoot quotes a rabbinical tradition which speaks of the presence of frost and snow at the time of the passover.

Verse 19. *Asked Jesus of his disciples and doctrine*] Inquired, perhaps, as to the number and character of his disciples, and the nature of his instructions. From our Lord's answer, we may infer that the high priest supposed, or appeared to suppose, that Christ communicated certain things to the disciples which he did not to the public, and it is to these *private* teachings, apparently, that reference is had. It is thought by some that Caiaphas wished to represent Jesus to Pilate as a man dangerous to the state, both from the number of his adherents and the sentiments he inculcated: and that it was in consequence of this desire he sought to learn from his own lips the nature of his instructions, and the extent of his influence.

Verses 20, 21. *I spake openly to the world*] "To the world," means, to the Jews generally:—another proof that John sometimes uses the phrase in this restricted sense. "Openly"—*publicly*, and *without disguise*. *In secret have I said nothing*] Nothing contrary to his public teaching:—therefore not any thing treasonable.

21 Why askest thou me ? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them : behold, they know what I said.

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so ?

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil ; but if well, why smitest thou me ?

24 (Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.)

In the synagogue, &c.] Not in any one synagogue in particular, but in the synagogues of the various towns or villages where he might be. These were places of general resort, and consequently the most favourable for the proclamation of his doctrines. *Ask them which heard me, &c.]* Whether friends or foes. Our Lord manifests in this appeal the boldness of conscious innocence : would that all his followers could invite rigid scrutiny with equal fearlessness !

Verses 22, 23. *One of the officers struck Jesus]* The learned say that the original intimates the blow was given on the cheek. This indignity and abuse of power were altogether inexcusable, for the prisoner is always presumed to be under the protection of the court ; and if he says or does any thing improper, the court only has the right to inflict chastisement. The Saviour administered, therefore, to the tyrannical and officious meddler a merited rebuke, though not so severe a one as that which similar treatment called forth on a like occasion from the intrepid apostle of the Gentiles. Acts xxiii. 3. *If I have spoken evil, bear witness]* "Evil," here, means either *contemptuously* or *falsely*.—*Bloomfield*. Had Jesus done either, he would have merited punishment ; though even then punishment should be in accordance with law,

MATT. xxvi. 59-75.

59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;

not left to individual caprice or time-serving. The Saviour's course in thus reproving the officer's misconduct is by no means opposed to the spirit of his injunction, that when smitten on one cheek we should offer the other to the smiter. Circumstances must determine the extent of forbearance and the mode of manifesting forgiveness of injuries. Public duty, however, should never be sacrificed to indulge feelings of private benevolence.

As Matthew's Gospel contains a much fuller account of Christ's examination before the sanhedrim than does that of John, we will now turn to that record.

MATT. xxvi. 59-75.

Verse 59. *The chief priests—and all the council*] Perhaps the word "all" should be here taken with some limitation, as signifying only the council *generally*; for both Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea were members of this body, (Luke xxiii. 50, John vii. 50,) and we cannot for a moment suppose that they were consenting to the illegal act of those who "sought to put Jesus to death." Indeed, we *know* from the explicit testimony of one of the sacred historians, (Luke xxiii. 51,) that Joseph *did not* consent to this procedure. *Sought false witness against Jesus*] We are not to understand the evangelist as intimating that the council sought to obtain *false witness* in preference to true testimony, for they cared not whether the evidence were true or false, so long as it made against Jesus: but as Christ could not

60 But found none : yea, though many false witnesses came, *yet* found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,

61 And said, This *fellow* said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

be convicted of crime unless by the production of untrue testimony, the evangelist hesitates not to say that the council *sought* "false witness." *To put him to death*] This they had resolved on ; and could they have brought it about without the formality of an investigation, they would not have troubled themselves as to witnesses : but being desirous of preserving the *show* of justice in his condemnation, and the law requiring the concurrent testimony of "two or three witnesses" (Deut. xvii. 6) to the conviction of an offender, they had no resource but the admission of false evidence. Testimony in his favour would not, probably, have been received.

Verses 60, 61. *Found none*] None on whose testimony they could condemn him, though strongly desirous of so doing : for, as Mark tells us, (xiv. 56,) though "many bare false witness against him, their witness (or testimony) agreed not together." Thus was his innocence made the more apparent. It is the opinion of some expositors that thus far the evidence adduced had been trifling, and such as, if consistent, would not have furnished ground for any serious charge. *At the last came two, &c.*] Two whose statements promised to furnish matter for capital accusation. *This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, &c.*] Not so—he had used no such language, and therefore the evangelist justly brands these persons as "false witnesses." Christ had said, some three years previously, in reply to a taunting request of the Jews for a sign or token that he

62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?

was sent of God, "Destroy this temple, and in three days—meaning on the third day—I will raise it up;" but this declaration was doubtless accompanied by such action as plainly showed that he spake not of the material building in the court of which he then stood, but of his own body. John ii. 19, 21. The remark was, therefore, designed as a prophetic intimation of his own death and resurrection; but by a slight perversion of language, and the suppression of that expressive action which was an index to his hidden meaning, it became distorted into a blasphemous speaking against the Jewish temple, which was deemed a capital offence. So for prophesying against the city of Jerusalem and its holy house, Jeremiah was declared, by the priests of his day, to be worthy of death; (Jer. xxvi. 11, 12;) and it was one of the serious charges alleged by the false witnesses against Stephen, that he had spoken "blasphemous words against this holy place." Acts vi. 13.

Notwithstanding the perversion of our Saviour's declaration, however, Mark says that these witnesses, also, "did not agree together"—their testimony did not accord; and the sanhedrim were consequently still left without sufficient ground for a capital charge. If, as is probable, Matthew gives the substance of the statement of one witness and Mark that of the other, we are possessed of some of the points of difference. Instead of "temple of God," Mark's witness says, "this temple *made with hands*;" and in place of the simple assertion of Christ's ability "to build it in three days," that witness advances the declaration, "within three days *I will* build another,

63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

made without hands." Finding that the statements of these men were insufficient to justify Christ's condemnation, the high priest seems to have determined on a change of plan, with the hope, probably, of leading Jesus to say something which might be employed to his own injury. He therefore arose, and asked Christ what he had to say respecting the matters alleged against him.

Verse 63. *Jesus held his peace*] Made no reply. The reasons usually assigned for his silence are, that he perceived the testimony adduced was insufficient to convict him, and that he penetrated the secret motives of Caiaphas in seeking thus to draw him out. According to Mr. Watson, however, "his silence had a deeper meaning: he knew that the wisdom of God had appointed that he should be found guilty upon a charge which was, in fact, the great truth by which he was glorified; namely, that he professed to be the Son of God:" if the knowledge of this fact influenced him, we may suppose his present silence was designed to bring the high priest at once to the true issue. *The high priest said, I adjure thee by the living God*] This, we are told, was the most solemn form known to the Jews of putting a person on oath. It is certainly a very impressive one. *Tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God*] 'This question appears not to have grown out of the statements of the witnesses, but out of a current report. As though Caiaphas had said, Art thou, as it is reported thou dost claim to be, the Christ the Son of God? It was an artful and malignant inquiry, designed to work the ruin of our

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said : nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of

Lord, however it might be answered ; for if Jesus should reply in the affirmative Caiaphas meant (as the result proves) to charge him with blasphemy, which would almost inevitably ensure his death ; if he replied in the negative, he laid himself open to condemnation as an impostor ; and silence would probably have been tortured into an evidence of guilt. But silence was now no part of our Lord's course ;—he was questioned concerning a vital truth, and ingenuously answers ; the examination having taken the turn he wished. The appellation “ Christ ” is of the same import as the Hebrew word Messiah ; indeed, it is the Greek rendering of that word. *The Son of God*] This designation does not seem to have been given by way of eminence merely, but as implying participation of the divine nature ; otherwise its assumption could not be construed into *blasphemy*. It would thus appear that the Jews expected their Messiah to be a divine person.

Verse 64. *Thou hast said*] A Hebrew mode of assent, equivalent to saying, *I am*. See Mark xiv. 62. *Nevertheless, &c.*] The word here translated “ nevertheless ” “ ought,” says Mr. Watson, “ as the connection shows, to be rendered *moreover* ;” for Christ, in addition to this confession of being the Messiah, uttered a solemn prediction of his coming to judge the world. *Hereafter shall ye see, &c.*] This declaration is generally supposed to have reference both to the manifestation of Christ's power in the awful calamities subsequently brought upon the Jewish people in the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the still more sublime spectacle of the general judgment.

man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He

Whether there be allusion to the former of these events or not, there can be no question that there is to the latter. *Sitting on the right hand of power*] At the right hand of the powerful or almighty God:—a highly figurative expression denoting that he would be manifestly clothed with the divine authority and glory. *Coming in the clouds of heaven*] A reference, probably, to the celebrated prophecy of Daniel: (vii. 13, 14:) “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like unto the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of days—and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom,” &c. This prophecy our Lord applies to himself, declaring that having received this universal kingdom, both as Son of man and Son of God, they who now sat as his judges should hereafter see him invested with its glories and armed with its authority; and that thus his claims to be both “the Christ” and “the Son of God” should be established, to the confusion and punishment of those who reject him. The language is strikingly expressive of the majesty and glory of our Lord’s future advent.—*Watson*.

Verse 65. *The high priest rent his clothes*] This he did “as a sign of pious horror at what he would represent as the audacity of such a man as Jesus in pretending to be the Messiah.”—*Ripley*. As the dress of the high priest, when not engaged in his sacerdotal duties, was similar to that of other Jews of rank, it was not the sacred garments which he now rent, but his ordinary clothing. The custom of rending or tearing the clothes, as a token of strong emotion—especially of grief and indignation—

hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

is of great antiquity in the East. See Gen. xxxvii. 34; 2 Kings xi. 13, 14; Acts xiv. 14. *He hath spoken blasphemy*] Not, indeed, by using reproachful or irreverent language toward God, but in arrogating to himself, a mere man as they supposed, the majesty and glory peculiar to the divine Being: and had he not really been that which he professed, this charge would have been true; but being that which he claimed to be, it was false. *What further need have we of witnesses, &c.*] Equivalent to saying they had no further need, inasmuch as Jesus admitted that he had claimed to be "the Christ, the Son of God."

Verse 66. *What think ye?*] Meaning, What punishment do ye think should be inflicted? *They answered, He is guilty of death*] That is, deserves to die. But why was he "guilty of death?" Had he been proved a blasphemer? By no means: he was *assumed*, not *proved*, to be guilty. The court ought to have demanded the *proofs* of his Messiahship; to have carefully examined their character with unprejudiced hearts and minds; and then, had he failed in the proof, they might have condemned him with some fair show of justice. But there was nothing of this kind. Closing their eyes against the evidence offered in his favour by the stupendous miracles which they knew him to have wrought, and some of which they had probably witnessed; and tacitly rejecting the testimony of their own scriptures to the truth and excellence of his doctrines, and the validity of his claims, they convicted him on his own confession as a blas-

67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands,

68 Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

phemer of the truth. The law under which they condemned him is recorded Lev. xxiv. 16, and directs that persons convicted of blasphemy should be stoned: but as our Lord was put to death by the Romans, who did not practise stoning, the manner of his death was not in accordance with the requirements of the Mosaic law.

Immediately on the close of this examination it would seem that our Lord was removed from the presence of the sanhedrim, and committed to the custody of certain officers of the court or servants of the high priest, or both; but was again brought before them for a second examination some two or three hours afterward. The account of this second examination is furnished by St. Luke, (xxii. 66-71,) and will be noticed in its proper place. It was during this recess of the court that the abuses considered in the following paragraph were perpetrated.

Verses 67, 68. *They spit in his face*] This act was accounted by the Jews, as it is by us, a mark of the utmost contempt and abhorrence. *Buffeted him*] Struck him with clenched fists. The persons who inflicted these indignities were not members of the sanhedrim, but the inferior officers of the court and the servants of the high priest. Luke xxii. 63, 64; Mark xiv. 65. *Others smote him, &c.*] Slapped him on the face. Luke xxii. 64. *Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, &c.*] This was after they had "covered his face" or "blindfolded" him: (Mark xiv. 65; Luke xxii. 64:) when, being (as they supposed) unable to see, they thus insultingly "mocked"

69 Now Peter sat without in the palace; and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

or ridiculed his pretensions to the prophetic office. The reader will notice the sarcasm implied in the words, "Prophesy, thou Christ:" as though they had said, "O thou Messiah—thou great prophet—prophesy (or tell us) who smote thee." Yet in these minor circumstances of contumely and insult, with what astonishing particularity were the words of prophecy fulfilled; and that by the perfectly free agency of these violent men!—"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting." Isa. l. 6. Probably our Lord was "blindfolded," or his face "covered," in conformity with a common usage of thus treating persons condemned for some capital offence. See Esther vii. 8. Multiplied and vexatious as were these insults, however, they were not all which our adorable Redeemer had to endure during this hour from these wretched mockers, for Luke tells us (xxii. 65) that "many other things blasphemously spake they against him?"—blasphemous, because derogatory to him as the Son of God.

Leaving Christ in the hands of his keepers, we will now consider the case of Peter, who, during the greater part of this examination, was in the "hall" of the high priest's residence (where, it will be recollected, the investigation was held) waiting to "see the end."

Verse 69. *Peter sat without, in the palace*] Mark says, (xiv. 66,) he "was beneath, in the palace." It has been already remarked, that by "palace" is meant the court of the high priest's house. The council assembled on this occasion, apparently, either in one of the rooms

70 But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

of the ground floor, open to the court, or at one end of the yard, under the gallery which ran in front of the second story rooms. In either case, we may reasonably suppose their place of meeting was slightly elevated above the floor of the open court, and thus the statements of both evangelists will appear to be in strict accordance with fact; for Peter would then be both "without" and "beneath" the place where the council were. *A damsel came to him, &c.*] This woman was, in all likelihood, the person mentioned by John as "the damsel that kept the door;" and the denial here referred to, the first of the three. See further on John xviii. 17, 18, pp. 363, 364.

Verses 71, 72. *When he was gone into the porch, another maid said, &c.*] Peter had gone into this porch to escape observation—but in vain. How clearly does this prove that our Lord was omniscient, and that all these events were foreseen! *Again, he denied with an oath*] This does not mean that he had before coupled an oath with his denial, but that he again denied having any knowledge of Jesus, and accompanied this his second denial with an oath. "He has told a lie, and he swears to support it. A liar has always some suspicion that his testimony is not credited; for he is conscious of his own falsity, and is therefore naturally led to support his assertions by oaths."—*Dr. A. Clarke.* Luke says that a man

73 And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.

74 Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which

also charged Peter at this time with being a follower of Christ.

Verse 73. *After a while*] Luke says, (xxii. 59,) about the space of an hour after. *Came they that stood by*] Luke has it, "another confidently affirmed," &c. It is likely that several were in company, most or all of whom were agreed that Peter was a follower of Christ, though but one, as stated by Luke, may have questioned him as to the fact of such connection. John seems to intimate (xviii. 26) that this person was kinsman to Malchus; that he was one of those who apprehended our Lord; and that he had seen Peter with Jesus in the garden. If this man had indeed witnessed the assault made by that rash apostle on Malchus, his recognising him now would be both natural and probable. *Thy speech*] Dialect or pronunciation. *Bewrayeth thee*] Betrayeth: his pronunciation showed that he was a native of Galilee: and as Jesus was commonly reputed to be also a Galilean, the servants inferred that Peter was one of his disciples. See, also, Mark xiv. 70. To the question now put Peter returned the most aggravated denial of all.

Verses 74, 75. *Then began he to curse and to swear*] Probably hoping by this means to satisfy his interrogators that he really knew nothing of Christ: and thus ward off the danger to which he deemed himself exposed. The word here rendered "to curse," signifies that he anathematized himself, or called down upon himself the divine vengeance, if he spoke falsely.—*Watson*. The

said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

word translated "to swear," intimates that he swore by the name of God. On the first charge he simply, though explicitly, denies; on the second, he appeals by an oath to God; on the third, he adds violent and gross profaneness to perjury. So deep and shameful was the fall of Peter! It is recorded by all the evangelists; and is both a striking proof of their integrity, and a lasting admonition to all to beware of the two fatal evils—self-confidence and unwatchfulness. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—*Watson. Immediately the cock crew*] This was the *second* time of crowing. Mark xiv. 72. Thus explicitly, though unintentionally, did Peter verify the prediction of his Master:—"Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." Mark xiv. 30. This was about three o'clock in the morning. Directly on the close of this third denial, and probably while the cock was crowing, Luke informs us that "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter;"—designing, probably, by this act to fix the attention of the fallen apostle upon the appointed signal, and to awaken within his breast those feelings of compunction by which he might be led to confession of his sin and to earnest pleadings for forgiveness. Nor was that look in vain: for Peter "remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice; and when he thought thereon, he wept." *And he went out, and wept bitterly*] Overcome by remorse and shame he left the place, and sought solitude, that he might there indulge the tears of penitence—the effusions of a truly broken and contrite spirit.

LESSON XXI.

[A. D. 30.]

FRIDAY, the day of the Crucifixion: *Christ brought a second time before the sanhedrim, now assembled in the temple, and condemned—Remorse of Judas—Christ accused before Pilate, who declares him innocent, but sends him to Herod, tetrarch of Galilee.*—Matt. xxvii. 1-14; Mark xv. 1-5; Luke xxii. 66-xxiii. 12; John xviii. 28-38.

LUKE xxii. 66-71.

AND as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes, came together, and led him into their council,

NOTES ON LUKE xxii. 66-71.

Verse 66. *As soon as it was day*] As soon as the day had fully dawned, though before the sun had risen—probably near five o'clock. This was on the morning of Friday, the day on which our Lord was crucified. *The elders, chief priests, and scribes*] Who constituted "the council" or sanhedrim. *Came together*] Reassembled. They now, probably, met in their usual council-chamber, (see Matt. xxvii. 1-5,) which, according to rabbinical writers, was not at the residence of the high priest, but in the precincts of the temple. "At the time of the former examination, so early in the morning, the temple would be shut up; but at the time of the latter, namely, after the dawn of day, it would be open, and there is reason to conclude from Matt. xxvii. 1-5, that the very consultation there spoken of was held at the temple."—*Greswell*. The Jewish law required that the trial of persons accused of capital offences should be conducted in the day: "Criminal processes," says the

67 Saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:

68 And if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go.

69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

Talmud, "can neither commence nor terminate but during the day. If the person be acquitted, the sentence may be pronounced during that day, but if he be condemned, the sentence cannot be pronounced till the next day."—*Talmud*, tract *Sanhed.*, c. iv, § 1. One reason why the sanhedrim held the present session probably was, that thus they might seem to act in compliance with the requirements of their law.

Verses 67, 68. *If I tell you, &c.*] Meaning, If I tell you *that I am the Christ*, "ye will not believe." He had, but an hour or two before, asserted his Messiahship in their presence, and they adjudged him, for so doing, to be "guilty" or *worthy* "of death;" and he knew well that they were now no more favourably disposed toward him than they were then. *If I ask you, &c.*] That is, if I propose questions in argument to support my claim, you will not answer me, nor, though convinced, will you release me.—*Bloomfield*. "The Hebrews," says Grotius, "as well as the Greeks, used to carry on argument by interrogation."

Verses 69–71. See on Matt. xxvi. 64–66, pp. 370–372. *Heard of his own mouth*] Heard from himself, or by his own confession, that he claims to be the Son of God, and therefore is guilty of blasphemy

MATT. xxvii. 3-10.

3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*.

MATT. xxvii. 3-10.

Verse 3. *Judas, when he saw that he (Christ) was condemned, repented himself*] That is, became filled with remorse for his wickedness in having betrayed an innocent man to death. This confession furnishes most decisive evidence of the blamelessness of our Lord's character and conduct: for had there been any thing censurable in his intentions, words, or acts, Judas would have readily seized on it as a partial justification of his own misconduct, and thus have sought to silence the upbraidings of his conscience. It is contended by some that Iscariot did not intend, or expect, so tragical an end to his treachery, but supposed, that as Christ had in other instances miraculously delivered himself from the violence of his enemies, so he would again. But even in this light he must still be viewed as a murderer, for he bargained to deliver Jesus into the hands of those whom he knew to be thirsting for his blood, and who might therefore be expected to do their utmost to bring about his death. *Brought the thirty pieces, &c.*] These he had received as the price of his treachery, and now offered to return them to the council, but they refused to accept them. *What is that to us?*] Meaning, it is nothing to us whether or not thou hast sinned. *See thou to that*] As though they had said, That is thy con-

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

cern:—the responsibility and guilt of that act—if guilt there be—rests on thee, not on us. So fallaciously do wicked men frequently argue. They had offered a bribe to Judas to place within their power a man of whom they knew no ill—against whom they could substantiate no charge—but whom they had resolved to sacrifice, to gratify feelings of personal animosity: hence they also were guilty—perhaps more guilty than their conscience-smitten and unworthy instrument.

Verse 5. *He cast down the pieces of silver, &c.]* Apparently in the presence of the sanhedrim. The words “in the temple” are to be understood, we presume, not of the sacred edifice itself, but of that appendage or office in which the “council” were now convened. Not being a Levite, Judas would not be privileged with admission into the temple itself. *Went and hanged himself]* Driven to the rash act by his hopeless despair. This passage has elicited much learned controversy: the employment, in the original, of a term which may be translated either *hanged himself* or *was strangled*, has led some commentators to think that he was choked by excessive grief; but the more sound interpreters very generally adopt the rendering of the common version. A shocking incident in the death of this unfortunate man is recorded, from the lips of Peter, Acts i. 18, namely, that “falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out:” from which it would seem, that after hanging himself, as stated by Matthew, he was “violently cast down from the place where he was hanging, by the hand of avenging Heaven, in order to make him a public example.”—*Watson*. Mr. Watson

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

supports his view of a supernatural retribution in these circumstances, by contending that the mere breaking of the rope by which Judas was suspended, and his consequent falling to the ground, are not sufficient to account for the mangled condition of his body. He discards the opinion, advanced by some, that Judas hung himself over a precipice. The suicidal character of Judas's death makes strongly against the probability of his repentance being of an evangelical character. True penitence humbles the soul, and leads the offender to hearty confession, deep self-abasement, and earnest pleadings for forgiveness: remorse of conscience may extort confession of guilt; but, if unaccompanied by the gracious, softening influences of the Holy Spirit, naturally leads to despair and a criminal death; and "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

Before leaving the subject, it may not be amiss to present to the reader the following extract from the Pictorial Bible:—"The Orientals generally have never been much addicted to suicide; nor does it appear that the Jews were so in the times of the Old Testament. They had, perhaps, learned this melancholy and criminal practice from the Greeks and Romans, among whom it was notoriously common. At all events, as we learn from Josephus, suicide was, in these later times, frequently resorted to by miserable and despairing men; and among the forms in which this awful relief was sought, hanging is mentioned as having been particularly common."

Verse 6. *It is not lawful to put them into the trea-*

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

sury] By "treasury" we understand the chests into which were cast the offerings of the people for the temple service: (see John viii. 20, vol. iii, p. 40 :) by means of which offerings the expensive ceremonials of the Jewish ritual were in a great measure sustained. The priests seem to have regarded this money as a *gift* from Judas, designed for the service of God; but because of the means by which it had been obtained, they feign a holy abhorrence at employing it in such manner. So particular were they in observing the proprieties of religion, while neglectful of its most important precepts! (Reader, is thy religion one of mere form? O, seek the power of godliness.) The scruple of the priests rested not on any positive prohibition, (save by inference,) for the law contains none: but it does prohibit "the hire of a harlot" being offered to God, (Deut. xxiii. 18,) and they doubtless correctly inferred that it would be much more objectionable to devote to his service the bribe by means of which an innocent man had been betrayed and murdered. Their fault, therefore, consisted not in refusing to put this money into the treasury, but in having employed it as the means of bringing about the death of Christ. *The price of blood*] "Blood" is here, again, put for *life*. The phrase probably had its origin in the inspired declaration that "the life of the flesh is in the blood," Lev. xvii. 11.

Verse 7. *Bought with them the potter's field*] The purchase was not made, in all likelihood, until some days after the crucifixion of Christ. Indeed, the notices of both the purchase and of the debate hinted at in verses 6, 7, would seem to be introduced, not in the order of

8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.

events, but by anticipation, so as to conclude at once the history of Judas Iscariot. This "potter's field" was doubtless so called from having been used by a potter as a place whence to dig clay for his wares. "So the field at Athens, appropriated as a cemetery for those who fell in the service of their country, was called *ceramicus*, from having been formerly used for brick-making."—*Bloomfield*. The "potter's field" is said by Jerome to have been situated on the south side of mount Sion. *To bury strangers in*] Not, we think, "strangers" of any and every nation or faith, but Jews from foreign countries who might die at Jerusalem.

There is a seeming disagreement between Matthew's statement of the return of those "thirty pieces" by Judas, and the disposition he says was made of them, and the declaration of Peter (recorded Acts i. 18) that Judas had "purchased a field with the reward of iniquity." The truth probably is, that Judas is there said to have personally done what he, by the return of the money to the council, indirectly occasioned to be done. This is a frequent mode of speech in the sacred Scriptures; and the adoption of this interpretation removes all difficulty from the case.

Verse 8. *Wherefore that field was called, &c.*] It was called "the field of blood"—in the current language of the Jews, *Aceldama*, Acts i. 19—because purchased with money which was confessedly "the price of blood." This title was given, we may suppose, by popular and habitual designation, and not by the choice of the council. Thus, as Mr. Watson remarks, the field, marked with this new and expressive name, remained both a

9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of

proof and a memorial of that remorse of Judas for his treachery, which affords so striking an evidence of the guiltlessness of his betrayed Master. The ordering of divine Providence in the designation and use of this field was most signal; for by making it a burial-place the remembrance of the event commemorated was the longer preserved, by the respect paid to places appropriated to that purpose. Its tombs—the tombs of *strangers*—may have continued to render it an object of interest long after the capture of Jerusalem: at all events, the appellation “field of blood” was a common designation of this field when Matthew published his Gospel; for he could not relate as a notorious fact so important a circumstance as the origin of this name, and its perpetuation to and use at that period, without his statement being contradicted, if false: so the fact being established, the history with which it stood connected was confirmed by a durable and visible monument. *Unto this day*] The time when Matthew’s Gospel was written; probably about A. D. 41:—some contend for a rather earlier, and others for a somewhat later date.

Verses 9, 10. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy, &c.*] There is nothing in the book of Jeremiah that bears any likeness to this extract, though there is a passage in Zechariah (xi. 12, 13) which strongly resembles it, and which is generally allowed to be the prophecy from which the quotation is made. Various modes of accounting for the discrepancy have been suggested; two or three of the more reasonable of which we annex. One of these is, that as the Jews anciently divided the Old Testament Scriptures into

silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value,

10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

three parts,—the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets,—beginning the third division with Jeremiah, whose name was consequently frequently used to designate the whole of that division, the evangelist may, in accordance with a custom said to have prevailed among his countrymen, credited Jeremiah with the prophecy, not as being its author, but because it was contained in the division which bore his name. Another conjecture is, that the word “Jeremy” was improperly inserted by some early transcriber, and not by the evangelist. In support of this opinion it is urged that some manuscripts, and the Syriac version, (probably the oldest version extant,) mention no name, but simply say, “spoken by the prophet.” A third supposition is, that Jeremiah actually wrote the last four chapters of the book of Zechariah, and that as this passage is drawn from one of them, he is truly its author. This view is supported by some very eminent men, and is said by Holden to be “the most probable conjecture.” The reader will form his own opinion; the compiler prefers the second hypothesis.

A comparison of the passage in Zechariah with that in Matthew will show that the quotation is far from literal:—the evangelist having here, as in other places, given the *meaning* of the prediction quoted, though not its exact phraseology. *The price of him that was valued*] “The *goodly* price,” as the prophet sarcastically observes; being that at which a slave was valued.—*Watson*. In Zechariah this act of giving the thirty pieces to the potter is attributed to the Shepherd—our

JOHN xviii. 28-38.

28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover.

Lord Jesus Christ—because (as with Judas in Acts i. 18) he was, by surrendering himself to this death, the occasion of its being done. For an extended and able note on this prophecy, see Watson's Exposition, pp. 299-301.

JOHN xviii. 28-38.

Verse 28. *Then led they Jesus to the hall of judgment*] To the *prætorium*,—the residence of the Roman prætor or governor when at Jerusalem. It is stated to have been a splendid edifice, built by Herod the Great for his palace. It was the most magnificent building in Jerusalem, with the exception of the temple; and included within its bounds the armoury and the barracks of the Roman soldiers. The object of the Jews in thus leading Christ to the “*prætorium*” was, to obtain from Pilate an order for the execution of their prisoner. *It was early*] The original imports, in Mr. Greswell's estimation, that it was before sunrise. *They went not into the hall, lest they should be defiled*] And so be prevented eating the passover. They must have feared that this defilement would have taken place either from their entering a dwelling whence leaven had not been removed, (Deut. xvi. 4,) or, which is more likely, by some accidental touch of a Gentile, which they superstitiously regarded as contaminating. This latter notion, it will be remembered, was a *refinement* of their teachers, and formed no part of the Mosaic code.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge

Verses 29, 30. *Pilate went out unto them*] Probably stepped into the porch or one of the balconies of the house: this he may be presumed to have done, as an act of condescension, from deference to the religious prejudices of the Jews. *What accusation bring ye, &c.*] The conversation recorded verses 29–32 took place outside of the judgment-hall, and is not to be regarded as an examination of Christ. *They answered, If he were not a malefactor, &c.*] Meaning, If he were not a violator of the law, and, as such, justly condemned by us, we would not have brought him to thee for thy sentence.* From this it would seem that the council had expected that Pilate would at once have sentenced Jesus to death, without inquiring into the nature of his offence; and were displeased that he had not proceeded in that summary manner. Their reply is not an answer to Pilate's question.

Verse 31. *Take ye him, and judge him, &c.*] Probably Pilate did not at this time know that the sanhedrim had already examined the prisoner, and had declared him to be "guilty of death:" he therefore tells them to inquire into the case, and to decide on it according to the provisions made in their law. He perhaps supposed the charge to be purely of a religious character; and that

* Lardner says, "These words import, 1st., If the crime he is charged with were not capital, we should have punished him ourselves, and not have come to you; 2d., If he were not guilty, we should not have accused him."—*Credibility, &c.*

him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death :

32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

if Jesus were even guilty, the punishment would not be capital. *The Jews said, It is not lawful for us to put to death*] Thus intimating that the offence was of a highly aggravated character, and ought to be visited with deprivation of life. This at once threw the matter into the hands of the governor; for the Jews had been deprived of this highest exercise of law. They doubtless still preserved the right of trying all cases affecting religious opinions and conduct among their own people, and of acquitting or condemning the criminal; though their sentence required, if fatal to the arraigned, the confirmation of the civil power before it could be executed. It is not unlikely that about this period of the proceedings the priests brought forward the false accusation recorded Luke xxiii. 2 :—"We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying, that he himself is Christ, a king." We say *false* accusation—for, so far from "forbidding to give tribute to Cesar," he had expressly enjoined on the Jews to "render unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's." The word "fellow" is not in the original, but is added by our translators for the purpose of filling out the sentence. They probably chose this term as being expressive of the contempt with which they seem to have supposed these persons regarded Christ. The passage might be rendered, "We found this *man*," &c.

Verse 32. *That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, &c.*] Rather, "Thus was the saying of Jesus fulfilled;" for it cannot be supposed that the Jews acted thus with

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

the design of fulfilling his prediction. The "saying" referred to is that recorded Matt. xx. 19, in which he declared that he should be delivered to the Gentiles and by them be crucified. These words were now virtually fulfilled by the priests surrendering him to the Roman authority, on a charge which they felt tolerably certain would secure his condemnation. Crucifixion is said to have been a Romish, not Jewish, mode of execution: by the Jewish law he should, as a blasphemer, (the ground on which *they* had convicted him,) have been stoned. The prescience of Christ, and the overruling providence of God, are strikingly exhibited in these proceedings.

Verse 33. *Then Pilate entered into the hall*] Until this time he had been conversing with the Jews outside. *Called Jesus, &c.*] The interview now had between the governor and the accused does not partake of the character of a regular trial, but of that of a private examination; the accusers being still without. *Art thou the King of the Jews?*] This question was founded, doubtless, on the charges brought against Christ, as noticed Luke xxiii. 2. The charge of dissuading the people from paying tribute Pilate does not notice; probably because he regarded it as unworthy of serious consideration. He well knew that many of the Jews held the opinion that it was contrary to their allegiance to God, and irreconcilable with the spirit of the Jewish laws, for them to pay tribute to a foreign power; but he also knew that this was a mere abstract question, unattended by any practical evils to the government.

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world.

Verses 34, 35. *Jesus answered, Sayest thou this of thyself, &c.*] That is, from thy own knowledge or suspicion of my having been concerned in seditious practices? This question may be regarded as a sort of appeal to the blamelessness of his past life. As Jesus *appears* to be ignorant of the information which elicited the question, it is likely that he was not within hearing of the accusation when it was made to Pilate. *Am I a Jew? Thine own nation, &c.*] "The full sense," says Bloomfield, "is well expressed by Kuinoel in the following paraphrase:—'No, I have not asked thee of my own thought. Of thee and thy case I know nothing. I am not a Jew, to know and care about such things. It is on the representations of thy countrymen and the chief priests that I examine thee. What hast thou done to afford ground for this accusation?'"

Verse 36. *Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world*] Passing by the last interrogatory of the governor, our Lord answers Pilate's first and main question, namely, Art thou a King? by intimating that he was, though not in the sense in which the Jews represented him as claiming to be. *They* charged him with attempting to set up an earthly dominion, in opposition to that of the Roman emperor, which charge he undertakes to disprove. By asserting that his kingdom was "not of this world," Christ meant that it was not of the same nature as earthly kingdoms are, nor designed to conflict with

If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then?

them: hence there was nothing seditious in his claim, inasmuch as his is not a civil, but a spiritual dominion, having its seat in the heart of man, and its object being to recover man from the love and practice of sin to the love and practice of holiness; from subjection to Satan to the service of God. One essential difference between the character of the rule he sought to establish and that of worldly monarchs Jesus then proceeded to set forth. [*If my kingdom were of this world*] Similar in character and design to temporal dominions. [*Then would my servants fight, &c.*] Probably meaning, that then they would have been instructed and admonished to fight. So far was this, however, from being the case, that lessons of meekness and forbearance had ever been pressed upon them; and a practical illustration of the non-resistance to constituted authority in which they had been trained had been recently exhibited in the conduct of his followers, in so peaceably submitting to the arrest of their Master and Lord. Earthly kingdoms, on the contrary, are sustained, in a great measure, by the power of an armed force; and their boundaries extended, generally, by successive and bloody conquests. [*Now is, my kingdom not from hence*] Meaning, it is thus manifest that my kingdom is not "from hence" or of this world.

Verse 37. *Art thou a king then?*] It would seem that Pilate wished to be sure that he fully comprehended Christ, whose previous answer appeared to furnish ground for concluding that he was a king, and therefore he repeats his inquiry. The question now put was equivalent

Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

to asking, Dost thou, then, indeed claim to be king? To this Jesus gives full assent by replying, "Thou sayest that I am." This is, probably, that "good confession" which Paul informs Timothy (1 Tim. vi. 13) our Lord witnessed or made before Pilate. *To this end was I born, &c.*] That is, for this *purpose* "was I born." Jesus speaks here in his human nature. *That I should bear witness unto the truth*] "By 'truth' here is meant," says Tittman, "not truth in general, but that primary one of God and his Son, and their counsels, plans, and works, respecting the salvation of men." The same eminent and evangelical expositor then asserts that the original terms do not denote (as many commentators explain) that Jesus came to *teach* religion; (whence they would have it inferred that Jesus merely rules over the minds of men by doctrine;) but to bear testimony in favour of, and establish the cause of truth. "In this sense," says he, "a similar phrase is used not only in John i. 8; iii. 26; v. 33; 3 John iii. 6; but in Luke iv. 22, and Acts xiv. 3. Our Lord, then, means to say that he came to recommend, stablish, and confirm religion: for he does not [here] sustain the character of teacher or master, but of *King*. Now it is not the part of a king to *teach* religion, but to commend, promote, and stablish it. Much less did our Lord mean to say that this was the *only* part of his royal office: for he has in other places [as lately before the sanhedrim] described his kingdom in a far more august manner. But here, before Pontius Pilate, he has only mentioned *part* of his [kingly prerogative,]

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in them no fault *at all*.

in order to teach (what, indeed, it was then of most consequence to know) that his kingdom was not a secular one." *Every one that is of the truth*] That is, who either has embraced, or is studious of acquiring, true religion. *Heareth my voice*] "Obeys my orders, follows my directions."

Verse 38. *Pilate said, What is truth?*] Meaning, probably, What is *that truth* to which thou referrest? So Doddridge. Without awaiting an answer, however, (probably because his mind was fixed on endeavouring to procure the liberation of Jesus, whom he seems to have regarded as an innocent, though perhaps weak-minded and mistaken man,) he again went out to the rulers, and declared to them that he found no fault or crime in Christ; and doubtless interceded for his acquittal. This greatly excited the indignation of our Lord's persecutors, who, as stated by Luke xxiii. 5, "were the more fierce" or urgent for his condemnation, and strongly asserted that "he stirreth up the people"—meaning, incited them to insubordination and rebellion against the Roman authority, "throughout all Jewry" or Judea, "beginning from Galilee to this place." To the like effect, though not as particular, are the statements of Matthew and Mark, that "the chief priests accused him of many things:" which accusations Pilate seems, on his return to the room wherein he had left Jesus, to have laid before the prisoner, but, to his utter astonishment, could draw from Christ no further answer. The reason of this silence, Mr. Watson says, "is obvious." "Had not our Lord," says he, "repelled the charge of sedition, Pilate

LUKE xxiii. 6-12.

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.

7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

would have had a show of justice in condemning him; but to clamorous and vague charges he answered nothing, as knowing that they could not affect his character, nor make his condemnation appear less unjust. He was to die, the *innocent* for the guilty; and it was enough that he established his innocence against every specific charge, that it might appear; and how truly it did appear is shown in the reiterated justification of him by Pilate."

In following the regular order of events, we must now turn to Luke xxiii. 6-12, for only this evangelist notices the incident of our Lord's being sent to Herod.

LUKE xxiii. 6-12.

Verses 6, 7. *When Pilate heard of Galilee*] Meaning, when he heard that Jesus first began his public teaching in that province: as is implied in the words, "*beginning from Galilee to this place*"—Jerusalem. From this saying he *inferred* that Jesus was a native and resident of Galilee. *He asked whether the man were a Galilean*] To this question Pilate received an affirmative answer: for Jesus was not only brought up in Galilee, but was commonly thought to have been born there. *As soon as he knew*] Learned from those around him. *That he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction*] To the region over which Herod had rule. *He sent him to Herod, &c.*] This was Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee; the person who caused John Baptist to be put to death. Herod was

8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad : for he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him ; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

9 Then he questioned with him in many words ; but he answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

11 And Herod with his men of war set him at naught,

now at Jerusalem, attending the feast of the passover. It is said to have been the *usual* practice among the Romans to hand over accused persons for trial to those governors to whose territory they severally belonged ; though each governor could, if he chose, try all offences committed in his own jurisdiction. Our Lord's accusers accompanied him, as appears from verse 10, to the tribunal of Herod. Herod was doubtless informed by Pilate of the nature of the charges preferred against the prisoner. See verse 11.

Verses 8, 9. *When Herod saw Jesus, he was glad*] Thinking he should now have an opportunity of gratifying a curiosity he had long felt. See Luke ix. 9. *He had heard many things of him*] Many reports of his wonderful acts. *Questioned with him in many words*] Asked him many questions. *He answered him nothing*] Made no reply. Jesus knew that these questions proceeded from an idle and vain curiosity ; not from a sincere desire to be profited. He perhaps saw, too, that if he answered, his replies would either be distorted into fresh grounds of accusation against himself, or become the subject of profane mirth to Herod and his followers, and so add to their guilt.

Verse 11. *Herod, with his men of war*] "His satellites ; that is, his body guard."—*Bloomfield*. A small

and mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.

body of troops which usually attended upon his person. *Set him at naught*] Treated him with contempt and ridicule. *Mocked him, &c.*] By pretending to pay him kingly homage. As Jesus had made no reply to Herod's inquiries, we must suppose that the latter had obtained information as to the character of the crime alleged against the prisoner either from Pilate or the chief priests now in attendance: most probably from Pilate. By arraying Christ in a "gorgeous robe," as though he were "king," we must suppose that Herod and his followers meant to evidence their contempt of his claim to regal dignity.* *Sent him again to Pilate*] To be disposed of as he saw fit. We presume Herod might have acquitted Christ and set him at liberty: but he probably wished to conciliate the Roman governor, and therefore courteously returned the supposed criminal to him.

Verse 12. *The same day, &c.*] Meaning, by this in-

* Herod may be regarded as having by this act suggested to the Romans the mockery of Christ which they subsequently carried into effect, for this mode of treating pretenders to royalty is not consonant to the Roman practice, though it is said to be frequently employed by the Orientals. Morier, in his "Second Journey," p. 351, mentions a similar scene as having occurred in his presence in Persia, in the case of one Mahomed Semaun Khan, who affected a claim to the kingdom, and who, on being arrested, was carried before the monarch. The king ordered a mock crown to be put upon the rebel's head, armlets upon his arms, a sword by his side, and that he should be then mounted upon an ass, with his face toward the tail, and thus led through the camp, the people crying out, "This is he who wanted to be king."

LESSON XXII.

[A.D. 30.]

Christ brought back again to Pilate, who repeatedly endeavours to procure the assent of the Jews for his release, but without success—They demand the pardon of Barabbas and the crucifixion of Christ—Pilate reluctantly consents to the death of Jesus.—Matthew xxvii. 15–30; Mark xv. 6 19; Luke xxiii. 13–25; John xviii. 39–xix. 16.

LUKE xxiii. 13–23.

AND Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people,

14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people; and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:

terchange of civilities—this sending Christ to each other for trial: thus paying deference to each other's authority. The cause of the enmity here stated to have existed between Pilate and Herod is unknown: the deference paid to each other on this occasion, however, opened the way to a reconciliation, and they were "made friends together." All these events took place, it will be remembered, on the morning of the day on which Christ was crucified.

NOTES ON LUKE xxiii. 13–23.

Verse 13. *Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, &c.]* Which he appears to have done directly after the return of Christ from Herod. *The people]* Perhaps meaning such of "the people" as had appeared as witnesses against Jesus. *Perverteth the*

15 No, nor yet Herod : for I sent you to him ; and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him :

16 I will therefore chastise him, and release *him*.

people] Turneth them away ; that is, from their allegiance to Cesar. *I—have found no fault in him—nor yet Herod*] What a remarkable declaration is this ; fully attesting the injustice which led to the execution of Jesus. Pilate certainly had no undue favour toward his prisoner. He was not so affected by his condition as to be likely to overlook any just ground of accusation. On the contrary, he was anxious to do the Jews a pleasure ; and he doubtless would have been glad to give way to their wishes at once, had he been able to detect the least degree of guilt in his prisoner. How strikingly does this, and other similar events in our Lord's life, show that, though Messiah was cut off, it was "*not for himself.*" *Nothing worthy of death, &c.*] Campbell renders, "He has done nothing to deserve death ;" and Wesley, "He hath done nothing worthy of death." Both of these translations express the sense better than does the common version.

Verse 16. *I will therefore chastise him, &c.*] Or, as the word might be rendered, (and is in 2 Tim. ii. 25,) *instruct* him—namely, by correction. The term is used to denote the proper education or discipline of children. Correction, by *scourging* or *whipping*, is the chastening spoken of. "It is not easy," says Mr. Barnes, "to see the reason why, if Pilate supposed Jesus to be *innocent*, he should propose publicly to scourge him. It was as *really* unjust to do that as it was to crucify him. But probably he expected by this to conciliate the minds of his accusers ; to show them that he was willing to gratify them if it could be done with propriety ; and perhaps he

17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)

18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas :

expected that by seeing Jesus whipped, and disgraced, and condemned to ridicule, and contempt, and suffering, they would be satisfied. It is further remarked, that among the Romans it was competent for a magistrate to inflict a slight punishment on a man when a charge of gross offence was not fully made out, or where there was not sufficient testimony to substantiate the precise charge alleged. All this shows, 1st., the palpable *injustice* of our Lord's condemnation; 2d., the persevering malice and obstinacy of the Jews; and, 3d., the want of firmness in Pilate. He should have released him at once, but the love of *popularity* led him to the murder of the Son of God. Man should do his duty in all situations; and he that, like Pilate in this instance, seeks only for public favour and popularity, will assuredly be led into crime."

Verses 17, 18. *For of necessity he must release one, &c.*] That is, one prisoner. The "necessity" for this arose merely from the force of usage:—"Now at that feast," says Matthew, (xxvii. 15,) "the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would." The origin of this custom is unknown; though it was probably introduced as a mark of respect to the feast. So, subsequently, the Christian emperors of Rome used to release all prisoners at Easter, (in honour of the resurrection of Christ,) except those confined for very flagrant offences. From Matt. xxvii. 16 we learn that there was now in confinement a "notable"—or notorious—"prisoner called Barabbas," who "for a certain sedi-

19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

tion made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison." Luke xxiii. 19. Pilate, being desirous of procuring the release of Jesus, and not doubting that the people would prefer setting him at liberty to freeing the murderer, gave them their choice between Christ and Barabbas, saying, "Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?"* And had the populace been left to perfect freedom of choice, they would probably have declared for the former: but the chief priests (Matt. xxvii. 20) "persuaded the multitude" to ask for Barabbas; whereupon they "cried out all at once, Away with this man, [that is, to punishment—to death,] and release unto us Barabbas." Luke xxiii. 18. At this time Jesus must have been in the prætorium, (see John xix. 4,) apart from Pilate, from his accusers, and from the multitude, who were all without.

Verses 20, 21. *Pilate, willing to release Jesus*] The sense of the original would be better given by translating *desiring*, rather than "willing." Wesley so renders. Pilate desired this because (among other reasons) "he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy:" (Mark xv. 18:) that is, from motives of personal hatred. He "knew," or *inferred* this, doubtless, from their clamorous and vindictive proceedings, and from their failure in attempting to convict Jesus of crime. He should,

* "Origen says, that in many copies of his time Barabbas was also called Jesus; and the Armenian version reads, 'Whom will ye that I deliver up unto you, Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?'"—*Calmet* and *Michaelis*.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why? what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go.

23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified: and the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

therefore, have acquitted him; but he *feared* the people. *Spake again to them*] This was, apparently, the *fourth* time of his interceding with them. Matthew tells us (xxvii. 21-23) what the governor said; namely, "Whether of the twain" (or two—Jesus or Barabbas) "will ye that I release unto you?" to which they answered, "Barabbas." He then asked, "What shall I do with Jesus, which is called Christ?" or, as Mark has it, (xv. 12,) "What will ye that I do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?" The questions are substantially the same; and the slight difference in phraseology may be accounted for on the supposition that the question might have been repeatedly put, in somewhat varying language. *They cried, Crucify him*] See note on Luke xxiii. 33, pages 424-426.

Verses 22, 23. *He said the third time*] This was the "third time" of Pilate's interceding for Jesus since the return of the latter from Herod; though probably the fifth in all. *They were instant with loud voices, &c.*] "Were very pressing and urgent with him."—*Bloomfield.* *Prevailed*] Obtained the mastery over Pilate's unwillingness to condemn Jesus, so that he "gave sentence that it should be as they required"—that is, that Christ should be crucified.

MATT. xxvii. 24-30.

24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye *to it*.

MATT. xxvii. 24-30.

Verse 24. *When Pilate saw he could prevail nothing*] Meaning, when he saw he could not bring them to consent that Christ should be liberated. This was because, through the influence of the chief priests, the people perseveringly "denied," or rejected, "the Holy One." Acts iii. 13, 14. *But that a tumult was made*] Pilate is represented by Philo to have been "naturally inflexible, rigid, and self-willed," but in this affair he appears vacillating and timid. Perhaps he feared (so the text seems to intimate) that a popular commotion would arise in the city should he authoritatively set Jesus at liberty; and that he would suffer in some shape from the outbreak. *The fear of offending the Jews*, therefore, caused him to yield to their clamours. *He took water and washed his hands, &c.*] Seeking to add, by this symbolical act, to the force of his declaration—"I am innocent of the blood of this just person." This *washing of hands* was a Jewish custom, (founded on the precept Deut. xxi. 6, 7,) and was used by Pilate for the purpose of strongly impressing the people with a sense of his own innocence, and of their guilt in demanding the crucifixion of the prisoner. For a similar purpose the Psalmist declares, (Psa. xxvi. 6,) "I will wash my hands in [testimony of my] innocency." Pilate reasoned very badly when he urged that because he did not wish to put Christ to death he was therefore guiltless in condemn-

25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

ing him. He had the power to deliver him, and in justice ought to have done it. One of the most essential characteristics of a good magistrate is, an impartial and upright administration of the laws; and the word of unerring truth assures us that "he that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord," Prov. xvii. 15. *See ye to it*] Meaning, Ye are responsible for his death—ye must take the blame of that.

Verse 25. *Then answered the people*] Still, it may be presumed, under the instigation of the priests. *His blood be on us and on our children*] As much as saying, "If this man be innocent, and we put him to death as a guilty person, may the punishment due to such a crime be visited upon us, and upon our children."—*Clarke*. The Jewish law required that if any man were falsely accused, the lying witness should, on proof of guilt, be dealt with as the accused would have been if he had been convicted. Deut. xix. 16-19. It would seem to have been in accordance with the spirit of this law that the people (for the purpose, perhaps, of removing all hesitancy from Pilate's mind) cried out, "His blood be on us and on our children." Fearfully did God avenge his violated law on their devoted heads, when, in the destruction of their city and nation by Titus, "wrath came upon them to the uttermost;" and, as if to make the retribution the more marked, "great numbers of them were put to death by crucifixion—that torturing mode, for the infliction of which upon our Lord they so fiercely clamoured. Five hundred of them a day are

26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified.

said to have been sometimes crucified by Titus, till at length, as Josephus, who was witness of these horrors, says, 'room was wanting for the crosses, and crosses for the bodies.' "

Verse 26. *When he had scourged Jesus*] Commentators tell us that among the Romans scourging always preceded capital punishment. This whipping was inflicted with two different instruments, one of which was called *virgæ*, the other *flagella*. The former was composed of twigs or small rods; the latter was a whip, with pieces of sharp bone, &c., fastened to it, by means of which the flesh was greatly cut and mangled. Horace calls it "the horrible whip." The original intimates that our Lord was scourged with the latter and more severe instrument; another mark of indignity and suffering which should not be overlooked; for, according to Bloomfield and others, it was usual to apply *this* scourge only to slaves, free persons being whipped with the *virgæ*. The mode of inflicting this punishment was, to secure the criminal to a low post in front of him, so that the body was bent slightly forward, and to strike the blows on the bare back. It is thought by many able commentators that Pilate did not design this scourging as a prelude to crucifixion, because he subsequently again attempted to induce the Jews to free Jesus; but hoped to satisfy their malignity by this punishment, and so save Christ's life. The compiler cannot embrace this view: he thinks that the governor did at this moment expect the prisoner to be crucified, and under this belief ordered him to be scourged. The attempt afterward made to

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.

28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

procure Christ's deliverance was the result of *new developments*. *He delivered him to be crucified*] "Delivered him" to the Roman soldiers, to be by them crucified. By Luke's expression, "He delivered him to their will," (chap. xxiii. 25,)—that is, to the will of the Jews, is simply meant that Pilate yielded to their wishes in reluctantly consenting for Christ to be put to death.

Verse 27. *The soldiers took Jesus into the common hall*] Mark says, (xv. 16,) "into the hall called pretorium." This is supposed to be the same as in John xviii. 28 is called "the judgment hall." It would seem to have been either an interior room, or the court of the house. *Gathered unto him the whole band*] The apparent readiness with which this was done may be accounted for by the fact that a part of the "palace" was allotted to the troops as their barracks. By "band," here, the cohort, or tenth part of a legion, is commonly thought to be meant:—it is not impossible, however, that no more is to be understood than what we should term a *company*, or the tenth part of the cohort, as they were thus subdivided. It is a point of no great matter.

Verse 28. *They stripped him*] That is, took off his outer garment. *They put on him a scarlet robe*] John says, (xix. 2,) "a purple robe." So, also, Mark. Both the original terms designate the same, or nearly the same colour. Pilkington says, "There is no greater difference between the meaning of the words, than there is if one English reader should say a red robe, and another a reddish robe:" and Ripley observes, that "anciently the

29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and

term *purple* was applied to any very red colour, and in good writers the original words signifying purple and scarlet, or crimson, are interchanged and used synonymously." It is not unlikely that this and the following acts of mockery were done by the direction, and perhaps in the presence of Pilate, (see John xix. 4, 5,) to manifest to the Jews the contempt in which he held their charge that Christ claimed to be a king.

Verse 29. *Platted a crown of thorns*] Platted a wreath of thorns, in imitation of a crown. It is not known what particular plant is contemplated by the original, or whether or not it was what we should call "a thorn." Some, from the similarity of name, judge it to be what is now known as the acanthus, or bear's foot, "which is rather a smooth than a thorny plant." Others contend that the same term as is here used often occurs in the Scriptures, and "always in the sense *thorn* and *thorny*; and that the ancient versions all confirm that version, as well as some ancient fathers." "It should seem," says Bloomfield, "that the latter interpretation is the best founded."* It is not necessary to suppose, however, (as some have,) that the thorns were pressed

* "The naba or nabda of the Arabians," says Hasselquist, "is, in all probability, the tree which afforded the crown of thorns put upon the head of Christ. It grows common in the East. This plant was very fit for the purpose, for it has many small and sharp spines: a crown might easily be made of those soft, round, and pliant branches; and what in my opinion seems to be the greatest proof is, that the leaves resemble those of ivy, as they are of a very deep green. Perhaps the soldiers would have a plant somewhat resembling that with which the emperors and generals were used to be crowned."

they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

into his head; for the soldiers sought not now to torture, but to mock. *A reed in his right hand*] It was anciently usual, in the East, for royal personages to carry in the hand a small staff, generally of ivory or gold, as an emblem of their authority. This was denominated a sceptre. In imitation of this usage the soldiers placed a reed in our Lord's hand. *They bowed the knee*] Pretending to pay him homage, as though he were really a king. Mark says, (xv. 19,) "worshipped him." All this, however, was to "mock" him; that is, to *ridicule* him, for assuming to be (as they thought) an earthly monarch. *Hail*] A usual salutation to persons in authority, expressive of the best wishes toward them, and occasionally employed on meeting especial friends. Having thus sported with him, they proceeded to manifest their contempt.

Verse 30. *Spit upon him*] A mark of the deepest contumely and disdain. *Took the reed and smote him*] Probably as an evidence of the scorn with which they regarded his claims. See, also, John xix. 3. During the whole of this scene of ridicule and insult "the evangelists record no word or action of our Lord. He sustained the whole in silence and unresisting submission, and thus fulfilled the words of the prophet—'He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth,' Isa. liii. 7." All this suffering and abuse he underwent, that he might purchase for man eternal life, joy, and glory.

The regular order of this affecting narrative requires

JOHN xix. 4-16.

4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man!

6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him*: for I find no fault in him.

that we should now turn to the account of John, as he mentions two or three incidents which the other evangelists have omitted.

JOHN xix. 4-16.

Verses 4, 5. *Pilate—went forth again*] That is, to the members of the sanhedrim, and to the people assembled outside the palace. It would seem that he had been in the interior, probably superintending the “mockery” of Christ. *I bring him forth, that ye may know, &c.*] Meaning, “I bring him forth” habited as you shall see him, “that ye may know I find no fault in him;” his claim of being a king not being worth notice. Such seems to be the sense of the passage. *Behold the man*] The man you charged with claiming to be a king. This saying seems to have been uttered as Jesus approached, the governor probably pointing to him. It cannot be determined whether Pilate spoke these words in compassion, and with the design of exciting the pity of the Jews, that they might be induced to consent to Christ’s liberation, or whether he uttered them in derision.

Verse 6. *Take ye him, and crucify him*] Pilate is not to be understood, by this expression, as *sanctioning* the

7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

death of Christ. The phraseology is evidently the language of one wearied with the obstinacy of the opposite party, yet determined not to take the responsibility of *ordering* the crucifixion. The sense therefore is, "I am satisfied of this man's innocence, and therefore shall not authorize his death. If ye are determined on his being crucified, take ye him, and on your own responsibility have him executed." That the Jews did not understand Pilate as authorizing them to put Jesus to death is clear from their immediately resorting to another charge—that of blasphemy.

Verse 7. *We have a law, and—he ought to die, because, &c.*] The reference is probably to the law against blasphemy, recorded Lev. xxiv. 16, of which crime they supposed, or pretended to think, Jesus guilty, in claiming to be the "Son of God." From this charge it is manifest that they understood our Lord to claim similarity of nature—to be the Son of God in the same sense as a male child is said to be the "son" of his father: and Titmann thinks that Pilate, too, understood the appellation in this sense. The reason why the priests now brought forward this new charge was, that they might, if possible, induce Pilate to assume the official responsibility of putting Jesus to death.

Verses 8, 9. *When Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid*] "More afraid" to crucify him.—Holden. "Pilate's apprehension arose probably from an impression, such as he could not suppress, that Jesus was at

9 And went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power *at all* against me, except it were given thee from above:

least a very *extraordinary* person, if not the character he claimed to be."—*Bloomfield*. Perhaps he had a dread of some mysterious and awful judgment coming upon him, should he crucify Jesus. *Went again into the judgment-hall*] Whither Christ had either already returned, or was now conducted. This was done that Pilate might have some further private conversation with his prisoner. *Whence art thou?*] Not meaning, from what country, province, or town, for the governor knew him to be a Galilean; but, of what parentage? The question is founded, doubtless, on the charge that he claimed to be the Son of God. *Jesus gave him no answer*] Commentators assign various reasons for our Lord's silence; however satisfactory the guesses may be to them, they are not to the compiler, though he cannot offer any better. He leaves the matter as he finds it.

Verse 10. *Speakest thou not, &c.*] Christ's silence seems to have both surprised and irritated Pilate; who thereupon informs him that he has power either to crucify him or to release him; thus intimating that he must not be treated with indignity. To this Jesus answers as in the eleventh verse.

Verse 11. *Thou couldest have no power against me—except it were given thee from above*] That is, from

therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him : but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's friend : whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cesar.

God : who by a special providence had permitted Jesus to fall into the hands of his enemies. We say by a *special* providence ; for our Lord had neither done nor said any thing which could, in the ordinary course of things, have brought him as a criminal before Pilate. It thus appears that Jesus might very properly be said to be delivered into the power of Pilate by the hand of God himself. Our Lord may have also designed his answer as a reproof of Pilate for his self sufficiency. *Therefore he that delivered me*] Spoken either of Caiaphas, or, by a noun of multitude, of all those who sought to bring about the death of Christ. *Hath the greater sin*] His or their "sin" was greater than was that of Pilate, (though he was by no means guiltless,) because the result of settled, implacable hatred.

Verse 12. *From thenceforth Pilate sought to release him*] Meaning, that he sought this with more earnestness than before ; being impelled to do so, probably, by a vague fear of Christ being somewhat more than he seemed to be. *The Jews cried out, If thou let this man go, &c.*] Perceiving that the procurator was studying every method of releasing Jesus, and that he paid little attention to their second charge of blasphemy, (perhaps as not falling under his cognizance,) the Jews now return to their first alleged crime of sedition and treason against Cesar, as one which especially fell within the province of the governor. The repetition and urging of this

13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

charge they now accompany with an implied threat of informing Cesar of Pilate's dereliction in failing to punish the seditious person. "The threat," says Bloomfield, "was not to be despised; since, as we learn from Suetonius and Tacitus, [two celebrated Roman historians,] Cesar [Tiberius Cesar, the ruling emperor,] was most suspicious, and punished with death any offence that bordered on high treason." "Thou art not Cesar's friend" is, it is said, to be understood as saying, "Thou art Cesar's enemy:" that is, he would be so considered if he liberated Jesus.

Verse 13. *When Pilate heard that saying*] The threat referred to above. *He brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat*] It is worthy of remark, that up to this time our Lord had not been formally or judicially examined by the procurator; the interviews which had been held, and the conversation which had taken place between Christ and Pilate, having been of a private character, within the pretorium, and apart from, and unobserved by, the people. But it is evident that what Pilate was *now* doing he was doing in public; and that from the mention of the "judgment-seat," and of the place where that seat was fixed, he was now sitting in his official or judicial character—in the ordinary place, and on the ordinary seat, where, as the deputy of Cesar, as the administrator of justice and the arbiter of life and death, he was accustomed to receive and decide upon all cases brought before him. *In a place called the Pavement*] So called, we presume, by the Romans.

The original denotes the pavement, or floor, to have been formed of pieces of variously coloured marble, placed in alternate squares or patches, presenting an appearance not much unlike the marbled oil-cloths now frequently met with in the halls of private houses among us. The floors of the Romish tribunals were very generally ornamented, at this period of their history, in this manner; and Suetonius states that Julius Cesar carried about with him in his expeditions a quantity of pieces of sawn marble with which to adorn his pretorium.—*Bloomfield*. This species of flooring is now commonly called mosaic. *In the Hebrew*] Meaning, in the dialect of the country, which is said to have been a mixture of Hebrew and Chaldee. *Gabbatha*] That is, *an elevated place*: so called from the tribunal being placed on an elevated area, in imitation of the practice which prevailed at Rome. It is said to have stood in front of the palace, in the open air; which satisfactorily accounts for the presence of the priests and other Jews, whose religious scruples did not allow them to enter the palace at this time, "lest they should be defiled," (John xviii. 28,) and so rendered unfit to eat the passover.

It was probably about this time—when Pilate had seated himself as judge—that he received from his wife the remarkable message recorded Matthew xxvii. 19, and which is narrated by that evangelist only. "When he was set on the judgment-seat," says the historian, "his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man"—meaning, do not be an accomplice in his death—have no hand in it—"for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." "'This day' may mean," says Bloomfield, "early this morning." Among the things she had "suffered"

in her dream, the commentators suggest, a partial view of the evils which would fall on Pilate if he condemned Jesus. This dream was doubtless produced by a supernatural agency, for the purpose of adding an additional testimony to the holy and blameless character of our Lord. We know there are some who scout at this idea, and endeavour to explain away the preternatural from the occurrence by supposing the woman to have been acquainted with Christ's character, and with the attempts that the Jews were making to destroy him; and that these things weighed on her mind, and naturally produced, when asleep, the dream referred to. But the facts in the case bear strongly against the admission of this supposition; for, 1st., As her husband, though filling a public station, and therefore much more likely to have known somewhat of Jesus than herself, was manifestly ignorant of our Lord's character, there is no probability that she was better informed in this particular than he. 2d., Christ was arrested privately in the night, and examined before and condemned by a secret tribunal of the Jews, without even the knowledge of her husband, and in all likelihood while she was asleep. There is consequently no reason to suppose that this dream was of an ordinary kind. "The believer in the Bible as a revelation from God," says Mr. Watson, "must believe that dreams have often been produced by a divine agency: and it is as objectionable in *reason* as it is in *faith*, to deny that a phenomenon so adapted to produce powerful impressions upon the mind should not often be an agency which Providence employs for its own purposes. In this case no natural cause could be given for this singular and timely dream."

14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

Verse 14. *It was the preparation of the passover*] Meaning, we think, the day before that on which the passover, strictly so called, was to be held. It is supposed by many eminent commentators that the paschal supper had been already celebrated by the nation, and that "the passover," here, is to be understood of the sabbath following. This view we cannot receive. See further on Luke xxii. 14, pp. 225-231. That the phrase, "the preparation," is to be taken in the sense of *day before*, see Mark xv. 42. Perhaps it should be remarked, that according to our division of time, the period referred to would be, not the day before, but the *same day* as that on which the passover lamb was to be eaten; for we commence and finish our civil day at midnight, the Jews began and ended theirs at sunset. As the feast was to be kept *after* sunset, such time would consequently be, to them, the opening of another day. *About the sixth hour*] Probably about six o'clock in the morning. It is thought by many excellent commentators that an error of number has here crept into the text, (the *5*, *three*, having been mistaken by some copyist for *5*, *six*,) and that the true reading is "the *third* hour." This supposition seems to be founded on Mark's statement, (xv. 25,) that at the third hour the Romans crucified—or began to crucify—Jesus. Other critics, however, and we think with better reason, deem the present reading authentic: forcibly urging, that if the original reading was "six," there would be a much stronger tendency to change it to three, that so the testimony of John might be reconciled, apparently, with that of Mark,

15 But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cesar.

16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away.

than to change from three to six, thereby causing seeming disagreement where there was, before, apparent harmony. Besides, the allowance of an error in the transcription would not, in reality, reconcile the two evangelists, for then one would be made to assert that this public examination was about the third hour—the other that the crucifixion was at that time; though assuredly a considerable interval must have elapsed between the close of the one and the commencement of the other.* *Behold your King*] The title “King,” Pilate had applied once before to Jesus, (Mark xv. 12,) and probably now again used it to show how little danger there was to be apprehended from Christ’s claim of sovereignty: hoping thus, perhaps, to induce them to retract the threat they had made, (verse 13,) and to consent to his releasing Christ.

Verses 15, 16. *Away with him, &c.*] Meaning, away with him to death—kill him. *We have no king but Cesar*] This declaration had its origin, doubtless, in the personal animosity the priests indulged toward Jesus; for it was a favourite opinion among the Jews that they

* “It is no objection to this view, that the proceedings before Pilate would thus be made to begin at a much too early hour. The habits of ancient times were very different in these respects from those of modern. Philo shows that this period of the day—namely, from sunrise to the ‘third hour’—or about nine o’clock of our time—was the usual period for judicial proceedings.”—*Greswell*.

LESSON XXIII.

[A. D. 30.]

Jesus led from the judgment-hall of Pilate to Mount Calvary—Simon compelled to bear Christ's cross—Jesus addresses the weeping women—Conversion of the penitent thief—Jesus commends his mother to the care of John—The Crucifixion, and its attendant miracles.—Matt. xxvii. 31–56; Mark xv. 20–41; Luke xxiii. 26–48; John xix. 17–37.

LUKE xxiii. 26–48.

AND as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and

owed obedience to no foreign power. But feelings of national pride or patriotism were forgotten or disregarded in their eagerness to secure the condemnation of the Saviour. *Then delivered he him, &c.*] As governor and magistrate pronounced sentence of death upon Jesus, and “delivered” him to the custody of the soldiery by whom he was to be executed. It was, apparently, at this stage of the proceedings that he was stripped of the “purple robe” which had been put on him in mockery, and dressed in his own garments. Mark xv. 20.

NOTES ON LUKE xxiii. 26–48.

Verse 26. *As they led him away*] Took him out of the city to the place of execution. The Jews appear to have regarded it as highly improper, if not unlawful, to execute a criminal within the walls of a city. As instances in proof, see the case of Naboth, at Samaria, 1 Kings xxi. 13; of Jesus, at Nazareth, Luke iv. 28, 29; and of Stephen, at Jerusalem, Acts vii. 57, 58. This opinion was probably founded on the directions given to

on him they laid the cross, that he might bear *it* after Jesus.

Moses, as recorded Lev. xxiv. 14, and Num. xv. 35, 36. *They laid hold on one Simon, a Cyrenian*] More particularly distinguished by Mark (xv. 21) as "the father of Alexander and Rufus;" who were, doubtless, persons well known in the church to which Mark's Gospel was addressed, and from whom a more full account might probably be obtained. Mark is supposed to have written his Gospel from the dictation of Peter, during the imprisonment of that apostle at Rome, for the especial benefit of the Christians in that city; and Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, is thought to refer to one of these sons of Simon in the salutation he sends (xvi. 13) to "Rufus, chosen in the Lord." Simon may be termed "a Cyrenian," either because of being a resident of Cyrene, (a city of Libya, on the African coast, in which were many Jews,) or because he was a native of that city, though now residing at Jerusalem or in its neighbourhood. It is not unlikely that he was singled out at the instigation of the Jews, as being a known favourer of Jesus. The Cyrenian Jews had a synagogue at Jerusalem; and some of them were among the earlier converts to the faith of Christ, and propagators of his doctrines. Compare Acts vi. 9 with xi. 19, 20. *On him they laid the cross, &c.*] It was customary among the Romans for the criminal about to be crucified to carry his cross, or rather, perhaps, the transverse beam of the cross, to the place of execution. In accordance with this usage, Christ, as we are informed by John, (xix. 17,) went forth "bearing his cross;" but being exhausted and faint, it is supposed that he was unable to carry it alone, and that in conse-

27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

quence of his weakness the conductors stopped Simon, apparently near the entrance of the city, and "compelled" him (Matt. xxvii. 32) to carry, or to assist in carrying, (for the original in Luke may, it is said, be construed either way,) the load which had been too much for Jesus. Perhaps Simon supported one end, and Jesus the other, of this beam. The exhaustion of Christ is not to be wondered at. In addition to his usual duties, he had, on the preceding day, attended on the passover supper, and had undergone a long and exciting conversation with his disciples. He had not only had no sleep during the night, but had been enduring the most exhausting anguish before being apprehended; and since his arrest, had been exposed to an almost uninterrupted scene of insult and abuse—*mocked, buffeted, scourged*. In all probability his persecutors feared that he would die, unless relief were afforded.

Verse 27. *There followed him a great company*] Composed chiefly, we presume, though not entirely, of those who had sought his condemnation, or of persons of similar views and feelings. *And of women, which also bewailed and lamented him*] These were doubtless his disciples, and some of them his most attached followers. How touching is this exhibition of their affectionate solicitude respecting him! Forsaken, apparently, by his apostles, who might have been expected to have adhered to him and his cause, and to have openly and nobly appeared as his friends and faithful servants, a crowd of women, with unshrinking devotion, attended him to the cross, and watered his footsteps with their tears!

28 But Jesus, turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

29 For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

The original, rendered "bewailed," &c., implies that their lamentation was accompanied by violent action—such as, beating their breasts, &c. The Orientals were much in the habit of expressing grief in this manner.

Verses 28, 29. *Jesus, turning unto them, &c.*] It would seem from this that there must have been some pause in the procession. Perhaps Jesus delivered this address during the delay occasioned by the transference of the cross, in whole or in part, from himself to Simon. *Daughters of Jerusalem*] Meaning, *women* "of Jerusalem:" in Hebrew phraseology, the inhabitants of any place are frequently called its sons and daughters. *Weep not for me, but for yourselves, &c.*] That is, "weep not *so much* for me, *as* for yourselves," &c. Our Lord here intimates that such sorrow would come on them and on their children, that his bodily pain would be accounted slight in comparison; and that therefore they might be prospectively considered more proper objects of pity than he. The sufferings of Christ were doubtless greater than were those of the Jews; but they were of a character which could neither be fully comprehended nor participated in by men: in mere physical agony, the tortures of the crucifixion did not, we presume, equal the pains endured by many in the siege of Jerusalem. Such seems to be the spirit of our Lord's remark. *The days are coming in which they shall say, &c.*] In which it shall be said, &c. There is here allusion to the destruc-

30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

31 For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

tion of Jerusalem, and the total ruin of the Jewish state; an evil associated with so many miseries, that barrenness, which had always been considered an opprobrium, would be regarded as a most felicitous circumstance by the Hebrew women.

Verses 30, 31. *Then shall they say to the mountains, &c.*] Meaning that many would, through the pressure of their calamities, ardently desire death, that so they might be delivered from their troubles. The same figure is used to express the dread with which the wicked would regard, at the day of judgment, their fearful doom. Rev. vi. 16, 17. *For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?*] This is a proverbial expression, denoting that more severe punishment would fall upon the wicked of that nation than now devolved upon himself. The Hebrews (as we learn from Psa. i. 3, Ezek. xx. 47 compared with xxi. 2, 3, and elsewhere) figuratively called just or righteous persons *green trees*, and wicked persons *dry trees*. If he, then, an *innocent* man, was to suffer thus for sins not his own, what will become of the wicked? Of those who are as ready for destruction as dry wood for the fire? *There were two others (malefactors) led with him, &c.*] Both of whom had probably been concerned with Barabbas in the "sedition" and "murder" of which he had been guilty. They are elsewhere called "robbers." Bloomfield is of opinion that these persons were not *robbers*, in the ordinary sense of the term, but rebels or insurgents; persons who had taken up arms in opposition to the Roman

32 And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

33 And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

government: "but who, when engaged in their unlawful courses, made less difference between Romans and Jews than they at first set out with doing." The passage is not (in the judgment of the best commentators) to be construed as reckoning Christ a malefactor, but as distinguishing him from them:—"There were two others led with him, each of whom was (what he was not) a malefactor."

Verse 33. *When they were come to the place called Calvary*] The word used by Luke is *Cranion*, which our translators have rendered by "Calvary," from the Latin *Calvaria*. The other three evangelists term it "Golgotha," that being its name in the language of Judea. Matt. xxvii. 33; Mark xv. 22; John xix. 17. All these names are of the same signification, namely, *skull-place*. It "was so called," says Bloomfield, "from being strewed with the skulls of executed malefactors, like the Ceadas at Sparta." It is probable, as the Jews did not bury malefactors in the sepulchres of their fathers, that their remains were interred on the spot; and that by digging fresh graves in the place at other executions, skulls might frequently be turned up, and perhaps left on the ground with little respect.—*Watson. There they crucified him*] Before affixing Jesus to the cross, however, it would seem from Matt. xxvii. 34 that his executioners offered him "vinegar to drink, mingled with gall:" or, as Mark describes the potion, (xv. 23,) "wine mingled with myrrh." It is thought by some that these were different mixtures;

the former of which was presented by his enemies in derision, the latter by some well-disposed persons in compassion, with the design of stupifying his senses, and thus mitigating his pains. But it is probably better to understand both evangelists as speaking of one and the same beverage, though designated by different names. The "wine" of the one and "vinegar" of the other is doubtless to be understood of the cheap, poor wine, which, mixed with water, constituted a common drink, especially for the poorer classes and soldiers: (so Adams, *Rom. Antiq.*, and Jahn, *Bib. Archæol.*.) and the word rendered "gall" in Matthew is occasionally employed to denote *any bitter infusion*, and may therefore agree with the "myrrh" of Mark, which is a bitter gum. So *Bloomfield*. The medicinal effects of myrrh are described by Hooper (*Med. Dict.*, p. 95, vol. ii.) as warming, strengthening, and antiseptic. [Query. Might it not be rather to *invigorate* than to *stupify* that this dose was administered? Such opinion would seem to be most in accordance with the spirit of Prov. xxxi. 6, on which precept the usage is thought to be founded.] Christ did but taste of the medicated cup; being perfectly willing and fully resolved to undergo all the suffering appointed him by his Father. Perhaps in this transaction there is a fulfilment, in part, of the prediction recorded Psal. lxxix. 21, "They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst, vinegar to drink."

To "crucify," is to put to death on a cross. There were two kinds of crosses used, one being shaped thus **†**, the other thus **X**. The cross on which our Lord was suspended is commonly supposed to have resembled the first figure. The *manner* of the crucifixion was as follows:—On arriving at the place, the criminal was stripped and laid on his back on the cross, the implement of death

lying on the ground. In this position his arms were stretched out, and he nailed by the hands to the cross piece, and his feet tightly lashed to the upright post with ropes. [Some say that the feet were also nailed.] The cross was then raised, and its foot placed in a hole prepared for its reception, and there secured: the feet of the crucified person being about a yard from the ground. Some commentators say that the whole weight of the body was sustained by the nails driven through the hands; but others state, with more apparent probability, that a piece of wood was affixed to the upright post, about its centre, on which the sufferer sat, or rested. In this position the crucified person was sometimes suffered to hang until pain, exhaustion, thirst, and hunger closed his miserable existence—which in some instances did not occur until after the lapse of several days. This dreadful punishment “can be traced back,” observes Bloomfield, “to as early a period as the age of Semiramis; and was a punishment chiefly inflicted on slaves, or on free persons convicted of the most heinous crimes.” Crucifixion was considered the most ignominious and cruel of deaths: hence the emphatic manner in which Paul calls the attention of the Philippians to this feature of our Lord’s humiliation: “became obedient unto death, *even the death of the cross*,” Phil. ii. 8.

The following scientific description of the agony induced by crucifixion we find in Knight’s “Pictorial Bible,” quoted from Rosenmuller. The account was originally furnished by “a learned German physician—George Gottlieb Richter—in a treatise devoted to the subject of our Lord’s crucifixion:”—

“The position of the body is unnatural, the arms being extended back, and almost immovable. In case of the

least motion, an extremely painful sensation is experienced in the hands and feet, and in the back, which is lacerated with stripes. The nails, being driven through parts which abound in nerves and tendons, create the most exquisite anguish. The exposure of so many wounds to the open air brings on an inflammation, which every moment increases the poignancy of the suffering.

“ Into those parts of the body which are distended or pressed, more blood flows through the arteries than can be carried back into the veins. The consequence of this is, that a greater quantity of blood finds its way from the *aorta** into the head and stomach than would be carried there by a natural and undisturbed circulation. The blood-vessels of the head become pressed and swollen, which of course causes pain, and a redness of the face. . . . The *aorta* not being at liberty to empty, in the usual free and undisturbed way, the blood which it receives from the left ventricle of the heart, is unable to receive its usual quantity. The blood of the lungs therefore is unable to find a free circulation. This general obstruction extends its effects also to the right ventricle; and the consequence is, an internal excitement, and exertion, and anxiety, which are more intolerable than the anguish of death itself. All the large vessels about the heart, and all the veins and arteries in that part of the system, on account of the accumulation and pressure of blood, are the sources of inexpressible misery. The degree of misery is gradual in its increase, and the person crucified is able to live under it commonly until the third, and sometimes till the seventh day. Pilate therefore, being surprised at the speedy termination of our Saviour's life,

* The great artery of the body, which rises from the left ventricle [cavity] of the heart.—*Hooper*.

34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they

inquired in respect to the truth of it of the centurion himself, who had the command of the soldiers, Mark xv. 44." *And the malefactors, &c.*] Thus "the scripture was fulfilled," observes Mark, (xv. 28,) "which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors:"—that is, was regarded, or dealt with, as though he were a transgressor; though in reality he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners." It will be remembered that our Lord had heretofore applied this very prediction to himself:—"For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end"—that is, the things spoken concerning me will have their accomplishment. See Luke xxii. 37.

Verse 34. *Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them*] This prayer was probably offered while the executioners were in the act either of nailing our adorable Redeemer to the cross, or while they were securing it in its upright position. It would certainly appear to have been offered prior to the partition of his raiment. Commentators are not fully agreed whether the prayer was put up in favour of his executioners merely, or of all his enemies—Jews and Romans. We incline to the latter opinion. Perhaps this, too, is to be regarded as the fulfilment of another of Isaiah's predictions, "He made intercession for the transgressors." The *import* of the prayer probably is, that opportunity for repentance might be granted to those guilty persons, and that pardon might be extended to such of them as should properly claim the mercy of God. That not a few of them *did* so is clear from the evange-

know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

lical history contained in the Acts of the Apostles. See, for instance, Acts ii. 37-41. Dr. Doddridge characterizes this prayer "as one of the most striking passages in the world. While they are actually nailing him to the cross," says he, "he seems to feel the injury these poor creatures did to their own souls, more than the wounds they gave him; and, as it were, to forget his own anguish in a concern for their salvation." *They know not what they do*] Meaning, perhaps, that they knew not the enormity of their guilt:—did not know that Jesus was, indeed, what he claimed to be, the Son of God. Some render, *They consider not* what they do. How far their ignorance of Christ's real character may be pleaded in extenuation of their guilt in crucifying him, we know not:—but it does appear that they were *less guilty*, through their ignorance, than they would otherwise have been. So Paul avers (1 Tim. i. 13) that he obtained forgiveness for his persecutions and injurious treatment of the early Christians, *because* he did it "ignorantly in unbelief." We presume that had the rulers and multitude been really convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, and had, notwithstanding such full belief, still persevered in putting him to death, sudden and overwhelming destruction would have come on them. But "because they knew not what they did," a suspension of vengeance was obtained for all, and the remission of sin for such as became truly penitent and believing. *They parted his raiment, &c.*] The soldiers who crucified our Lord did this. John says, (xix. 23, 24,) they divided his garments (the coat excepted) into four parts,

35 And the people stood beholding : and the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others ; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

“to every soldier a part :”—so that, from this incident, we learn the number of soldiers who were engaged in crucifying Christ. Doubtless those who crucified the “malefactors” acted in like manner : for the clothing of the criminals (and, probably, whatever other property they might have about them) fell to the executioners as their perquisite. The coat, or inner garment, being “without seam, woven throughout” as one piece, (perhaps peculiar in this respect,) they determined to cast lots for, which they accordingly did ; thus unwittingly fulfilling another prophecy uttered in reference to the circumstances of Christ’s death : “They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots,” Psa. xxii. 18. Mark tells us (xv. 25) that these events took place at “the third hour,” or about nine o’clock of our time ; and Matthew adds, (xxvii. 36,) that “sitting down, they [the soldiers] watched him there ;” to prevent any one removing him, or in anywise interfering with the execution.

Verse 35. *The people—and the rulers—derided him*] Ridiculed him ; tauntingly intimating that he was an impostor, and that his great works of beneficence were mere pretence. Passers-by, too, we are told, (Matt. xxvii. 39, 40,) reviled him, “wagging” or nodding their heads in token of supreme contempt, and sarcastically urging him to save himself—thus intimating that he could not, with all his boasted power, deliver himself out of the hands of his enemies. Thus unconsciously did they verify the prediction recorded Psa. xxii. 7 : “They that see me laugh me to scorn : they shoot out the lip : they

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And a superscription also was written over him in

shake the head." The priests and rulers said, "Let him come down from the cross, and we will believe him." This, however, was but the language of *insult*: and had he listened to the taunt, they would have been as incredulous as ever. The evidence afforded subsequently by his resurrection was more astounding than would have been his descent from the cross, and they readily steeled themselves against *that*. But to all these insults to Christ, they added *blasphemy against God*:—"Let him deliver him now," said they, "if he will have him:" (Matt. xxvii. 43:) language almost verbatim with another portion of the Psalm above referred to. See verse 8. We can scarcely repress the wonder, that the divine vengeance did not break out against the miscreants and consume them. Surely God's ways are not as man's ways!

Verses 36, 37. *Vinegar*] As before, poor wine. This little circumstance furnishes another of those incidental proofs of the truth of the gospel history which so frequently occur. The soldiers, being detached on this service for the day, had taken with them their appointed provision, and were hence provided with *posca*, or sourish wine. It was from their own store that they derived the drink thus mockingly offered to Christ. Greswell says, this circumstance "seems to imply the arrival of their usual dinner hour, the fifth hour of the day"—or about our eleven o'clock. *Save thyself*] That is, deliver thyself from the cross.

Verse 38. *A superscription was written over him*]

letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Affixed to that part of the upright post which rose above the cross beam. John calls this "a title," (xix. 19,) meaning thereby a *notification*, of his alleged crime. Mark terms it "the superscription of his accusation," Mark xv. 26. It was probably either attached to the cross before Jesus was led from the pretorium, or carried before him, and affixed after arriving at Calvary. Both modes were usual. As an illustration of one of these modes we cite the case of Attalus, one of the martyrs of Vienna, who was led about the amphitheatre, preceded by a person bearing an inscription, "This is Attalus the Christian." *In letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew*] There were now at Jerusalem persons from various parts of the widely-extended Roman empire; some of whom, in all probability, would be acquainted with one of these languages, but not with either of the other. In order, therefore, to accommodate as many as possible, and make the accusation as generally known as he could, the governor had it written in the three tongues. The Greek, it is said, was the language of commerce throughout the civilized world, and would therefore be sufficiently familiar to most of the foreigners; the Latin was the language of the government, and would of course be employed in its proclamations; the Hebrew, as it is termed, meaning the Chaldee-Syriac, was the common language of the country. The notice put up in the outer court of the temple, prohibiting the heathen and unclean persons entering the inner precincts, is said by Josephus to have been expressed in these same languages. *This is the King of the Jews*] A comparison

39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged

of the different "titles," as furnished by the four evangelists, will show that they all (though Mark and Luke are almost similar) differ somewhat. These seeming discrepancies may be reconciled either by supposing, as some have done, that three of the evangelists quote different accusations—Matthew, for instance, taking the "Hebrew," John the "Greek," and Mark the "Latin;" and that the phraseology slightly differed in each:—or that no one of them gives the *whole* of the inscription, but aims at conveying to the reader the substance, merely, of the accusation; and that the exact reading is to be made up by uniting the peculiarities of each. If the latter view be taken, (which we think the most probable supposition,) the full "title" would be, This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. According to John, (xix. 21,) the phraseology of the superscription was unsatisfactory to the chief priests, who accordingly urged Pilate to change it; "Write not," said they, "The King of the Jews; but, that he said, I am King of the Jews:" "thus endeavouring," observes Dr. A. Clarke, "by the addition of a vile lie, to countenance their own conduct in putting him to death." Their application, however, was unsuccessful; the governor answering, "What I have written, I have written:" a form of speech equivalent to declaring that no alteration would be made. In the opinion of some commentators, Pilate could not, legally, have made any change, because the Roman laws forbade the sentence being altered when once pronounced; and the writing of the inscription was deemed equivalent to the promulgation of the sentence.

Verses 39, 40. *One of the malefactors railed on him]*

railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

Matthew and Mark, speaking more generally, implicate both thieves in this "railing." Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 32. It is possible that at first both might have joined in it; and that one, becoming convinced that Christ was *not* an impostor, not only ceased railing, but reproved his brother "thief." "Cast the same in his teeth" (Matthew) simply means, united in the same reproaches as the priests and multitude were uttering. *Dost not thou fear God, seeing, &c.*] The *sense* of this rebuke is well given in a note in Barker's Bible:—"The condemnation [or punishment] which thou now sufferest, [and that justly,] causeth it thee not to fear God?" thus intimating that his punishment ought to produce on his mind a deep religious impression, but which his joining in the railing against Christ showed had not been effected.

Verse 42. *He said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me, &c.*] Meaning, regard me with *favour*, when thou comest, &c., so as to admit me to a share of its blessedness. The "kingdom" to which the thief referred is doubtless to be understood of that kingdom of eternal glory in heaven where Christ shall for ever reign, and to the privileges of which he has obtained admission for his saints through his precious atonement and availing intercession. The case of this believing penitent is most

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

instructive and comforting: being one of the brightest examples of faith contained in the book of God. Says Bishop Hall, in his "Reflections" on this petition, "He saw thee hanging miserably by him, and yet styles thee 'Lord;' he saw thee dying, yet talks of thy kingdom; he felt himself dying, yet talks of a future remembrance. O, faith stronger than death, that can look beyond the cross at a crown! O blessed thief, that hast thus happily stolen heaven!"

Verse 43. *To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise*] The word "paradise" is derived from one of the Eastern languages, (some say, from the Persian, others from the Armenian,) and denotes *a garden*: and as the Orientals generally bestowed great pains on their gardens, making them places of luxury and enjoyment, it readily came to be employed for any exceedingly pleasant place. "Hence it is no wonder," says Bloomfield, "that the term came to denote, among the later Jews, that pleasant abode in Hades [the place of departed spirits] appointed for the reception of the pious dead, until they should, at the day of judgment, be again united to their bodies."

This declaration of our Saviour may be regarded as establishing the doctrines of the immateriality of the human soul, and of its capability of existence apart from the body. But especially is it important as demonstrating that at whatever period a penitent sinner may turn to Christ with true faith, he will be accepted of him. Men ought not, however, to delay seeking the favour of God, presumptuously supposing that a later period will answer as well: for while the case before us forbids any sinner's

despairing of salvation, it offers no ground for presumption. The promise, "to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," implies, of course, that after the general judgment the thief should be admitted to the enjoyment of that more perfect and enduring blessedness in heaven, of which the felicity of "paradise" was but a foretaste and earnest.

It would seem that the "sixth hour," or noon, was now at hand; and it was probably about this time (that is, during the interval between the conversion of the penitent thief and the supernatural darkness, the next event mentioned by the first three evangelists,) that the touching incident recorded by John, (xix. 25-27,) and by him only, took place. "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus," says that apostle, "his mother, and his mother's sister," (the "Salome" of Mark xv. 40, called by Matthew, xxvii. 56, "the mother of Zebedee's children,") "Mary the wife of Cleophas," (distinguished by Mark, xv. 40, as the mother of James the less and of Josès, or Jude; which James is, in Matt. x. 3, said to be "the son of Alphaeus;" whence it appears that Alphaeus and Cleophas are one and the same person,) "and Mary Magdalene." The other evangelists speak of the presence of these women at a later stage of the proceedings, and represent them as then standing "afar off." It is possible that after the incident mentioned by John, they removed, for some reason, to a greater distance from the cross. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple whom he loved," (this "disciple" was John himself,) "he said, Woman, behold thy son!"—that is, he who is to be to thee as thy son. He referred to John. The mode of address here used is not to be deemed harsh or disrespectful, however much so it may sound to

44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth unto the ninth hour.

us. "Then said he to the disciple, Behold thy mother"—meaning, she whom thou art to treat and respect as thy mother. Thus did Christ commend the two persons whom he most loved to the care and affection of each other. What an example of filial affection, respect, and care is here! a suitable model for all children! Not even the bitter agony Jesus was undergoing could make him forgetful of his mother: while making atonement for the world, he cared for her temporal comfort. "From that hour," says the evangelist, "that disciple took her unto his own home:"—from which it would seem that her husband, Joseph, was dead, and that she was in indigent circumstances. Tradition says, that she continued to live with John in Judea until she died, about fifteen years after the crucifixion of our Lord.

Verse 44. *It was about the sixth hour*] About noon. Mark expresses it with greater exactness, (xv. 33,) "When the sixth hour was come." *There was darkness over all the earth*] Matthew says, (xxvii. 45,) "over all the *land*,"—meaning, apparently, the land of Judea. So, also, Mark. Some of the earliest commentators thought it universal—extending over *the whole earth*; but the most eminent expositors think that it spread itself merely over Palestine. It was doubtless preternatural:—for that it was not a common eclipse is certain from the fact, 1st., that the moon was now about full, whereas an eclipse can only occur at the *change of the moon*; 2d., from its duration, which was three hours, while a total eclipse never continues more than a quarter of an hour. *Until the ninth hour*] Until three o'clock

in the afternoon. At that time the evening sacrifice was offered,* and the slaying of the paschal victims had commenced. At this time, too, Christ, "our Passover," was slain. Query. Was not this coincidence designed? This "darkness" was the first of the miraculous events which accompanied the crucifixion of our Saviour; and is thought by some to have been designed to prefigure the calamities that would soon overwhelm the Jewish nation. We, however, prefer to regard it as an attestation from heaven to the truth of our Lord's statements respecting his character and mission.

According to Mark, (xv. 34, &c.,) Jesus, "at," or, as Matthew has it, "about" the ninth hour, cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which means, according to both evangelists, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" These words are quoted from the twenty-second Psalm, first verse, and are generally supposed to import that the sensible comforts of the Spirit of God were now in a great measure withdrawn from the sufferer; who, though neither guilty, nor actually regarded as such by God, was yet dealt with as though he were, because he had voluntarily put himself in the sinner's stead, to make atonement for his transgressions. "They are spoken," says Holden, "in his human nature, and probably refer in some way to his being offered up as a piacular sacrifice."† It may be, however, that our Lord merely meant by the exclamation to signify that he

* Maimonides informs us that the evening sacrifice usually commenced about half-past two, and was generally over at half-past three: but that on the passover day all the usual evening service was antedated, so as to be over before the ninth hour, when the paschal service was to begin.—So, also, Josephus, *Wars*, b. vi, c. 9, sec. 3.

† That is, as an *expiatory* or *atoning* sacrifice.

was now accomplishing what is in the psalm predicted of the Messiah; and thus again to intimate to those around that he was indeed the Christ. Immediately after this loud cry, our Lord, "knowing that all things—meaning all he had to suffer—were now accomplished," may be supposed to have added, with the design of verifying another prediction, as stated by John, (xix. 28,) "I thirst;" whereupon "one ran (Mark xv. 36) and filled a sponge* full of vinegar," (or sourish wine, of which there stood a vessel full, John xix. 29,) "and put it on a reed,"—John says, "on hyssop,"†—and so "gave him to drink"—accompanying the act with the remark, "This man calleth for Elias," Matt. xxvii. 47. Others said, "Let be; let us see whether Elias will come to save him;" or, as Mark has it, "to take him down." Bloomfield remarks, that the best commentators are of opinion that the persons who thus spoke and acted were foreign Jews, who either mistook Christ's words, or intentionally and maliciously perverted them, in derision of his claim to be the Messiah, and with reference to a common opinion that Elias would return to life at the coming of the Messiah, and prepare the way for his kingdom. "When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar," says John, (xix. 30,) "he said, It is finished,"—meaning, we presume, that all which had been predicted concerning his sacrificial death was finished. Luke says, (xxiii. 46,) that Jesus added, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," and "gave up the ghost."

* The sponge was used, because a cup could not readily be conveyed to his lips.

† Bloomfield says, "There are several species of the hyssop; one of which (no doubt the one here meant) has a woody, reed like stalk, of two feet or more in length."

45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.

It is perhaps worthy of remark, that the evangelists use three different modes of expression in detailing Christ's death, though our translators have rendered them all by one phrase. A literal rendering of these terms would be—in Mark and Luke, *he expired*; in John, *he yielded*, or *delivered, up his spirit*; in Matthew, *he dismissed his spirit*. They are all used, however, to express the simple thought that *he died in consequence of his sufferings*: and yield no support to the notion that the death of our Lord was a mere voluntary act of his will, by which he separated his soul from his body. Striking and beautiful as that thought may be, it conflicts with some of the clearest passages of holy writ; such as, “Ye killed the Prince of life,” Acts iii. 16; “He became obedient unto death, *even the death of the cross*,” Phil. ii. 8,—meaning, a death resulting from crucifixion; and is not, therefore, admissible. We recollect but one passage that *seems* to favour the opinion here reprobated, namely, (John x. 18,) “No man taketh it [his life] from me, but I lay it down of myself:”—and that, properly interpreted, gives the opposite sense; for, so far from implying that Jesus would exert his divine power authoritatively to dismiss his spirit, it clearly denotes that though he had the power, he would, notwithstanding, yield himself up to the will of his enemies. “The early death of our Lord is not, therefore,” says Mr. Watson, “to be ascribed to his own volition, but to the extremity of his sufferings.”

Verse 45. *The veil of the temple was rent in the midst*] Matthew and Mark say, “in twain, [or two,]

46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

47 Now, when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

from the top to the bottom." Matt. xxvii. 51; Mark xv. 38. This veil was that large and richly-embroidered curtain of purple dye which separated between the "holy" and "most holy" places:—that is, between the outer room of the temple, in which the priests generally ministered, and that inner room where anciently the divine glory dwelt, and which no one was permitted to enter but the high priest, and he but once in the year,—namely, on the day of atonement. The rending of this veil was doubtless simultaneous with the death of Jesus, and occurred at, or immediately after, the ninth hour. The *object* of this rending is not stated in Scripture, and therefore cannot be positively affirmed: conjectures are numerous and unsatisfactory: the prevalent opinion, however, is, that it was intended to point out the fact that the Mosaic dispensation was now abolished. In addition to this rending of the veil of the temple, Matthew says, (xxvii. 51,) "the earth did quake, the rocks rent, and the graves were opened:" all which we cannot but regard, under the circumstances, as being brought about by the *direct agency* of God, and therefore so far supernatural.

Verse 47. *When the centurion*] The officer of the guard. Matthew adds, "and they that were with him." *Saw what was done*] Meaning, probably, the uncommon darkness, the earthquake, the cry and sudden death of Jesus: (Mark xv. 39 :) of the rending of the veil they must have been ignorant. *He glorified God, saying,*

48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.

JOHN xix. 31-42.

31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath-day, (for that sabbath-day was an high day),

Certainly this was a righteous man] He "glorified" God, by declaring his belief of the innocence of Jesus: to which conviction he was led by the prodigies he had witnessed. Matthew says of the officer and soldiers that "they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God." It is not unlikely that the centurion made use of both expressions, as his emotions were undoubtedly strong, and sought vent in more than one exclamation. He probably borrowed the phrase, "Son of God," from the taunts of the priests and other rulers.

Verse 48. *All the people—smote their breasts, &c.*] Being deeply affected by the things they witnessed. Perhaps the word "all" is to be taken with some limitation: it may merely denote a large number of them.

JOHN xix. 31-42.

Verse 31. *The Jews*] The rulers—especially the priests. *The preparation*] Day before the sabbath: the holy day was now close at hand; probably not more than two or three hours distant. *That the bodies should not remain on the cross on the sabbath*] It would have been a violation of the Jewish law, (Deut. xxi. 22, 23,) and at variance with Jewish usage, to have permitted these bodies to hang on their crosses overnight at any time, and doubtless much more so on the eve of the sabbath: and would have been deemed still more out of place on

besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith there came thereout blood and water.

that particular sabbath, which was "a high" or *great* sabbath:—that is, one of uncommon sacredness and solemnity. That which rendered this period a day of such special note was, that it was both the ordinary sabbath, and the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, consequently a day of "holy convocation." *Besought Pilate that their legs might be broken*] With the view, apparently, of expediting their death. "The legs, we learn, were broken just above the ankle, by an iron mallet."—*Bloomfield*. *Might be taken away*] Might be taken down and buried: probably on the spot where they were crucified. That the request of the rulers was granted is manifest from the contents of the thirty-second verse.

Verse 34. *One of the soldiers pierced his side*] Probably with a view of extinguishing the last remains of life, if he should not be really dead. The evangelist does not say whether the right or left side was pierced: the general supposition is, the left side. *Forthwith came thereout blood and water*] "The only *natural* explanation that can be offered of this fact is to suppose that some effusion had taken place in the cavity of the chest, and that the spear penetrated below the level of the fluid. Supposing this to have happened, and the wound to have been inflicted shortly after death, then, in addi-

35 And he that saw *it* bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

tion to the water, blood would also have trickled down, or, at any rate, have made its appearance at the mouth of the wound, even though none of the large vessels had been wounded. It is not necessary to suppose [as many do] that the pericardium was pierced; for, if effusion had taken place there, it might also have taken place in the cavities of the pleura; and, during health, neither the pericardium nor the pleura contains fluid, but are merely lubricated with moisture on their internal or opposing surfaces, so as to allow of free motion to the heart and lungs."—*Kitto's Cyclopædia of Bib. Lit.* But, after all possible research, we are obliged to admit that it is very difficult to ascertain the physical cause of our Lord's death; and no less so, to account satisfactorily for the effusion of the "blood and water."

Verse 35. *He that saw it*] Meaning, that he himself saw it. *Bare record*] Doth herein bear record—testifieth to the fact of Christ's death. *He knoweth he saith true, that ye might believe*] That is, because he knoweth he saith truly, ye may assuredly believe, or rely on, his testimony.

Verses 36, 37. *These things were done, that, &c.*] Or, by the doing of this thing—the piercing of our Saviour's side instead of breaking his legs—the scripture was fulfilled. The passages referred to are, Exod. xii. 46, and Num. ix. 12, which enjoin that not a bone in the paschal lamb should be broken; and as this lamb was one of the most striking types of Christ, the direction is

37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

taken by John and applied to Jesus; and said to have had its complete fulfilment in the antitype, through the failure of the soldiers to break his legs. By this circumstance an express prophecy, also, had a partial fulfilment—namely, the one recorded Zech. xii. 10, “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced.” In the language of prophecy an event is often represented as present when it is really future: so Jehovah represents himself as *already pierced*, though the *wound* was not inflicted until now. As the passage quoted from Zechariah was spoken by Jehovah of himself, and is applied by John to Christ, the conviction is irresistible, that John believed the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Christ of the New to be one and the same Being.

“We must here be struck,” writes Mr. Barnes, “with the wonderful providence of God, that so *many* scriptures were fulfilled in Christ’s death. All these things happened without any *design* to fulfil the scriptures by the men engaged in these scenes; but whatever was done by Jew or Gentile tended to the fulfilment of prophecies long on record, and with which the Jews themselves ought to have been familiar. Little did they suppose when delivering him to Pilate—when he was mocked—when they parted his garments—when they pierced him—that they were fulfilling ancient predictions. But in this way God has so ordered it, that the firmest foundation is laid for the belief that he was the true Messiah, and that the designs of wicked men shall be overruled to the fulfilment of the great plans which God had in the creation of the world.”

38 And after this, Joseph of Arimathea (being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews) besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and

Verse 38. *After this*] After the death of Jesus. *Joseph of Arimathea—besought Pilate that he might take the body of Jesus*] As Christ was crucified as a felon, his body could not be *claimed* by his friends, though the ruling power might give it to them, if he saw fit, on their application. Hence Joseph “besought” Pilate’s permission for its removal. This Joseph is represented by Matthew (xxvii. 57) as “a rich man;” and by Mark he is termed “an honourable councillor;” (Mark xv. 43;) that is, a member of the sanhedrim—the epithet leads us to suppose a prominent member. Of course he was not accessory to our Lord’s death. Luke xxiii. 51. His private character stood high, for Luke says, “he was a *good* man and a *just*, who also himself waited for the kingdom of God:”—that is, for the manifestation of the Messiah. He seems, however, to have been a timid, diffident man; for though he was a disciple of Christ, it was “secretly, for fear of the Jews.” On making the above-named application, however, he “went in *boldly* unto Pilate;” (Mark xv. 43;) as though no longer fearful of being known as the friend and follower of the despised Nazarene. This great change was probably produced by the extraordinary circumstances accompanying the crucifixion; which fully confirmed him in the belief of Jesus’s Messiahship, and inspired him with a confidence and energy before unknown to him. Mark says, (xv. 42,) the application was made “when the even was come;” probably not far from five o’clock. The “Arimathea” to which Joseph belonged is supposed to be the Ramathaim Zophim of 1 Sam. i. 1, the birth-place and after-residence

Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

39 And there came also Nicodemus, (which at the first came to Jesus by night,) and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*.

of the prophet Samuel. Its *location* is not known; though Professor Robinson suggests it to be that of the present Soba, about six miles west of Jerusalem, and south of the territory of Benjamin. Joseph's request for the body of Christ greatly surprised Pilate, who " marvelled if he were already dead; and calling unto him the centurion," or officer who had command of the execution, "he asked him whether he had been any while dead." The cause of Pilate's astonishment was, that Jesus should have so soon expired, crucifixion being a somewhat lingering death. *Pilate gave him leave*] Permission to take the body: Matthew says, with greater exactness, "commanded the body to be delivered." This was after he "knew" or had learned "of the centurion," (Mark xv. 45,) that Jesus was really dead. *Took the body*] Receiving it, doubtless, from the soldiers.

Verse 39. *There came also Nicodemus*] Who was also a "ruler." John iii. 1, &c. *Brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes*] "Myrrh" is a resinous gum, of a reddish-brown colour, exuding from the trunk and branches of a small tree growing in some parts of Arabia and Abyssinia. It has a bitter taste, and a strong and not unpleasant smell. Anciently it was an ingredient in the most costly ointments, and was also esteemed as a perfume. (See Exod. xxx. 23; Psal. xlv. 8; Prov. vii. 17; Sol. Song iii. 16; v. 5, 13.) The "aloes" of the Bible is not the bitter drug known by us under that name, but a highly fragrant wood, the produce of a tree (*aquillaria*

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

agallochum) which grows in the East Indies. In European commerce it has been known under the name of *eagle-wood*. The best aloes-wood is described as being very heavy, of a black colour, marbled with ash-coloured veins, and somewhat bitter in taste; and burning like pitch, in bubbles, if a small piece of it be laid on hot coals, at the same time yielding a most grateful odour. Both "myrrh and aloes" are mentioned by Herodotus as among the articles used in embalming. *A hundred pound weight*] Some have objected to this amount as too large, especially as aloes-wood was very costly; and have supposed that an error has crept into the text: but it is well known that it was not uncommon for large quantities of perfumes and spices to be used at funerals; besides, the text does not state the *proportions* of the "myrrh and aloes;" there might have been, and most probably was, a much larger proportion of the former, which was abundant, and also moderate in price.

Verse 40. *Wound it in linen clothes*] In linen bandages, similar, probably, to those in which Lazarus was swathed. See on John xi. 44, vol. iii, p. 273. Matthew says, (xxvii. 59,) "in a clean linen cloth." Probably the body was first enwrapped in a sort of sheet, and this properly secured by bandages. Thus both evangelists agree. This linen, according to Mark, (xv. 46,) Joseph purchased for the occasion. *With the spices*] The "myrrh and aloes." The body of Jesus was not embalmed, owing to the near approach of the sabbath, but merely wrapped in these spices: the embalmment was probably expected to be performed early in the following

41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation-day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

week; and these spices may have been now employed with a view to the better preservation of the body from putrefaction, as well as a mark of affection and honour.* *As the manner of the Jews is to bury*] Rather, to prepare for burial. The expression, "as the manner of the Jews is to bury," or prepare for interment, by no means implies that all Jews were buried in this manner. It is sufficient to establish a practice as a custom when all follow it who possess the requisite means.

Verse 41. *In the place where he was crucified there was a new sepulchre*] Hewn, according to Matthew, (xxvii. 60,) "out of the rock." The same authority states also that this sepulchre was the private property of Joseph. *Wherein was never man yet laid*] We cannot but admire the particularity with which the sacred historians describe the circumstances connected with the crucifixion, burial, and ascension of Christ: for by this minuteness the cavils of unbelievers are effectually refuted. As our Lord was the first, and, so long as he remained therein, the *only* inhabitant of this tomb, there

* "It is probable," remarks the Pictorial Bible, in commenting on the general practice, "that to some extent this effect might be produced by such external application of pungent spices and aromatics; but we question whether the primary object may not rather have been to overpower, by strong perfumes, the disagreeable effects arising from advancing corruption. As the sepulchres of the Jews were often family sepulchres, which it was necessary to reopen whenever a new death occurred, the more weight is due to this consideration, as influencing the origin of the practice."

could be no question as to his identity when he arose; whereas, if the sepulchre had been before used for interments, infidelity might have had some apparent reason for doubt. This was unquestionably foreseen, and purposely guarded against in the divine arrangements.

Verse 42. *There laid they Jesus, &c.*] Being impelled, apparently, by the rapid approach of the sabbath, to place him temporarily in the nearest sepulchre to which they could obtain access. How wonderfully does the hand of Providence appear in all these events! Had not Joseph gone to Pilate to beg the body, or had Pilate refused to grant his request, our Lord would doubtless have been interred with the two thieves. But the spirit of prophecy had declared, hundreds of years before, that though he should make "his grave with the wicked," it should also be "with the rich in his death;" (Isaiah liii. 9;) or, as Lowth renders, "his grave" or death "was appointed with the wicked, but with the rich was his tomb:" and the prediction was fulfilled to the very letter, though not only without any design on the part of any of the actors to bring about such fulfilment, but contrary to all human probability. Having deposited the mortal remains of his beloved Master in the sepulchre, Joseph, according to the testimony of Matthew, (xxvii. 60,) "rolled" or caused to be rolled "a great stone to the door" or entrance "of the sepulchre," for the purpose of preserving the body against the ravages of beasts, "and departed." But even then some of Christ's faithful female disciples lingered, "sitting over against the sepulchre," (Matt. xxvii. 61,) and left not the spot until reverence for the sabbath, or the approaching darkness, compelled them. These devoted mourners were "Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Jesus," and, we presume, the Virgin Mary and

Salome. These tarried so long at the sepulchre that they had not time to purchase their spices before the sabbath, and were consequently obliged to postpone the purchase until the close of the holy day. (See Mark xvi. 1, where "*had* bought" should, according to the original, simply read "bought.") From Luke's record it would seem that *another* company of female followers, who had come with Jesus from Galilee, also followed Joseph when he took the body for burial, and "beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid;" after which they "returned, and prepared spices and ointments" before the sabbath, and "rested the sabbath-day, according to the commandment." Luke xxiii. 55, 56. This preparation for a more effectual embalming of our Lord's body when the sabbath should end, demonstrates that the disciples had no expectation of his return to life, and consequently that they had not properly understood his repeated declaration that after three days, or on the third day, he would rise again. This care for the proper performance of all due funeral solemnities is therefore an incident of great importance in the evidence of the truth of Christ's resurrection, as it establishes the fact that they expected he would continue to lie in the grave, and that therefore they could have been no parties to a plot to take away his body in the night. "This," says Mr. Watson, "is one of those powerful evidences of the veracity of the gospel which so frequently occur without any design on the part of the writers of these narratives, and so unequivocally stamp them with truth." Others, besides the persons enumerated, must have known of the place of Christ's interment, for the rulers came afterward and sealed the stone. Matt. xxvii. 62. Perhaps they got their information from the soldiers.

LESSON XXIV.

[A. D. 30.]

The chief priests ask for and obtain a guard to protect the sepulchre—Account of Christ's resurrection, and of some of the manifestations by which it was attested—Conspiracy between the priests and the soldiers to deceive the people.—Matthew xxvii. 62–xxviii. 15; Mark xvi. 1–13; Luke xxiv. 1–43; John xx. 1–25.

MATT. xxvii. 62–xxviii. 8.

NOW the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

NOTES ON MATT. xxvii. 62–xxviii. 8.

Verse 62. *Now the next day*] The day following that on which Christ was crucified—this would be the Jewish sabbath. *The priests and Pharisees came to Pilate, &c.*] These were, in all probability, some of the more bitter and influential members of the sanhedrim:—not the whole body. This visit was made, we presume, in a private manner—possibly under cover of night. It does not appear to have been considered improper to call on a magistrate on the business of his office on the sabbath, if, as at present, the case were of a pressing nature. The law nowhere prohibits this, and cases may readily be conceived in which it would be necessary.

Verse 63. *We remember that that deceiver said, &c.*] By “that deceiver,”—or, as a more literal rendering would be, *that vagabond*,—the priests meant Jesus. *After three days I will rise again*] As our Lord does not appear to have conversed with any but his disciples

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead, so the last error shall be worse than the first.

on the subject of his resurrection, it is not unlikely that the priests founded their present declaration on Christ's figurative expression recorded John ii. 19, "Destroy this temple," &c. If this supposition be correct, it shows that they knew the sense which he meant to convey, and exposes the fallacy and iniquity of the construction which they attempted to put on these words on his trial. (See Matt. xxvi. 61.) *Command that the sepulchre be made sure*] That is, be securely guarded. The rulers do not, to be sure, explicitly ask for a guard; but that this was their meaning, and that they were so understood, appears both from Pilate's answer and from the fact that in no other way could the sepulchre be "made sure." *Lest his disciples steal him, and say, He is risen*] Of this, however, there was no danger; for the disciples do not appear to have even thought of Christ's promise that he would rise again; much less had they prepared any plan of abstracting their Master's body. Still, in preferring the request they did, the rulers acted the part of discreet magistrates, careful of the public tranquillity. And this carefulness on their part to prevent imposition has turned greatly to the advantage of Christianity, by furnishing one of the strongest inferential proofs of the truth of the resurrection of Christ which the case admits of. *So the last error be worse than the first*] Meaning, this last imposition, of professing Jesus to have risen from the dead, be "worse"—more extensively pernicious in its influence—than his "first" deception in claiming to be the Messiah. This they might well apprehend it to be,

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch, go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can.

66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

as furnishing a *seeming* proof of the truth of his pretensions.

Verse 65. *Ye have a watch*] Commentators are not agreed as to the exact meaning of these words. Some understand them as a permission or suggestion to the priests to employ in this service a portion of the troops allotted, during the continuance of the great festivals, to the preservation of the public tranquillity: others take them in the sense, "The guard is at your service," or, "Take a guard,"—meaning, an additional guard. Be this as it may, the "watch" was doubtless a body of Roman soldiers, and not, as some have thought them to be, the Levitical guard of the temple. *Make it as secure as you can*] That is, protect it (the sepulchre) from being entered, by all the means in your power—make it perfectly safe.

Verse 66. *So they went, &c.*] The sealing of the stone and setting of the watch may not, and probably did not, take place until the evening of the following day;—that is, not until the close of the sabbath: for if they had, it is scarcely possible, we think, that these acts—especially the setting of the watch—should not have become known to the disciples. It is, however, very clear, from the narrative of events on the morning of the first day of the week, that they had no knowledge of them. Besides, these acts would have been so gross a violation of the sanctity of the day, that the sanhedrim dare not have ventured on their performance, during the sabbath, even if they wished them done. The only objection to this

view is, that then the body of Christ would be left unguarded during the whole of the sabbath, and thus the disciples might have had opportunity to take it away. The answer to this argument is, 1st., That the sanhedrim felt assured the sanctity of the sabbath was a sufficient guaranty against any depredation during its continuance; and 2d., That the rulers doubtless satisfied themselves, before sealing the stone, that the body was really in the sepulchre. *Sealing the stone*] A mode of security in use from very early times; (for an instance of which, see Dan. vi. 17;) and which was understood to place the thing sealed under the special protection of the power whose signet the seal bore, so that it could not be removed, or in anywise disturbed, but by the authority the signet represented. The stone was "sealed," probably, by passing a band of leather or cord around it, and affixing, by means of the seal, each end to one side of the entrance, so that the stone could not be removed without breaking the seal.* By this means they effectually guarded against any unfaithfulness on the part of the soldiers. The seal was probably the governor's official signet. The "watch" seems to have been set at the time the stone was sealed. As the accounts of the resurrection furnished by the four evangelists appear at first sight somewhat confused, if not contradictory, we beg the reader's attention to the following outline, condensed from the various authorities within our reach:—

* Instead of wax, the priests probably used clay—a material still frequently employed for such purposes in the East. "Norden, in his Travels in Egypt, Nubia, &c., speaking of sealing a granary, says, 'The doors are shut only with wooden locks; but the inspectors of the granary, after having shut the door, put on it their seal, on a handful of clay, which they make use of as wax.'"—*Cottage Bible.*

The principal embarrassment in the history of the resurrection arises from the difficulty of harmonizing the accounts of the time or times at which the women visited the sepulchre, and the order in which the visits were made. The earlier expositors proceeded on the supposition that all the women formed one band; and out of this view arose almost inextricable confusion. About a century since, however, a different hypothesis was proposed, which has greatly lessened, though perhaps not entirely removed, the difficulties of the case.

"By one of those singular coincidences which sometimes occur," observes Mr. Townsend, "three competent and learned men were engaged at the same time, though without the knowledge of each other, in studying the Scriptural account of the resurrection. These were Pilkington, a country clergyman, whose work is a monument of patient investigation; Doddridge, the well-known author of the 'Family Expositor;' and Gilbert West, a layman, whose 'Treatise on the Resurrection' will always be valued by those who would understand the evidences of their religion."* These three independent writers all came to the conclusion, after the most diligent investigation, that there were *two companies* of women—the doings of one of which are chronicled by Matthew, Mark, and John, while Luke is to be understood (in chap. xxiv. 1-8) to speak of the other body, and of that only. "The best outline of Mr. West's plan," says Townsend, "is that compiled by Dr. Doddridge in the

* Mr. West's work was actually published when Pilkington's was ready for publication; and the latter has directed his reader to correct one of his sections (the section itself being printed off) in consequence of Mr. West's observations. Dr. Doddridge had also published the part of the Expositor containing the Gospels.—*Townsend.*

postscript to the first part of the 'Family Expositor,' which is herewith offered, with some slight condensation :—

During the time of our blessed Redeemer's lying in the grave, several of the pious women who had attended him from Galilee, together with some of their female friends and acquaintance at Jerusalem, agreed to meet at his sepulchre early on the morning of the third day to embalm the body. Of these, the two Marys and Salome (Matt. and Mark) were the earliest in repairing to Calvary: while they were on the way to the sepulchre an angel descended, and amid the consternation and fear of the soldiery rolled away the stone from the mouth of the cave, and the Lord arose. On recovering from their terror the guard seem to have precipitately departed from the garden, and returned to the city. The soldiers having left, the angel disappeared; and the three women approaching the sepulchre, saw that the stone was removed; whereupon Mary Magdalene, concluding from thence that the body was removed, left her companions, and ran (John xx. 1, 2) to inform Peter and John of the circumstance. While she was gone, Salome and the other Mary entered the tomb, (Mark,) and in the cave saw, to their great astonishment, an angel, who informed them of the resurrection of Christ, and bade them go and communicate the intelligence to his disciples, with the promise that Jesus would meet them in Galilee: (Matthew and Mark :) upon receiving this message they hastened to the city. Just after they left, John and Peter must have arrived, followed by Mary Magdalene. These apostles entered the cave, (John xx. 5-10,) and noticed the grave-clothes lying there, but saw no one, the angel having rendered himself invisible. Having

satisfied themselves that the body of Christ was not in the sepulchre, the apostles returned home, leaving Mary Magdalene outside the sepulchre, weeping. After a while she stooped and looked into the cave, and saw two angels sitting, who then spoke to her, inquiring why she wept. She answered them, and immediately upon this the Lord appeared to her, (John xx. 14, 15,) and sent by her a message to his disciples, upon which she returned to Jerusalem to tell the disciples what she had seen and heard. John xx. 18. Our Lord appears to have next manifested himself to Mary the mother of James, and to Salome, while on their way to the city to deliver the message of the angels, saying to them, "All hail." Matt. xxviii. 9. After Mary Magdalene had left the sepulchre, Joanna and the women with her arrived there, (as mentioned by Luke xxiv. 1, &c.,) and entering, at first saw no one, but presently the two angels who had appeared to Mary Magdalene showed themselves, and assuring them of the resurrection of Jesus, reminded them of its having been foretold by himself, but gave no charge to carry the information to the apostles, that having been already attended to. These women seem to have arrived at the place where "the eleven" were before the two Marys and Salome, (Luke xxiv. 22-24,) and told the disciples (which was all they could tell them) that they had seen a vision of angels, who asserted that Jesus was alive. Hereupon Peter ran a second time to the sepulchre, and looking in, saw the grave-clothes, but not the angels: of this he, on his return, made report. About this time, before the arrival of either of the Marys or Salome, the two disciples seem to have started for Emmaus; for we find that in their conversation with Jesus, on their way to that village, they speak of the

MATT. xxviii. 1-8.

1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre.

report of Joanna's company, but appear to be utterly ignorant of Christ having manifested himself to any of the disciples. When the other women did arrive, however, and gave assurance that they had seen and conversed with the Lord, and that he had even permitted two of them to touch him, many of the disciples believed not, but regarded their intelligence as "idle tales:" and do not seem to have been convinced of the truth of the resurrection until the evening of the day, when Jesus manifested himself to the whole body of the apostles, Thomas excepted.

MATT. xxviii. 1-8.

Verse 1. *In the end of the sabbath*] That is, after the sabbath; or, as Mark has it, (xvi. 1,) "when the sabbath was past." *As it began to dawn, toward the first day of the week*] As the dawn of the first day of the week (our Sunday morning) began to appear. John says, (xx. 1,) "when it was yet dark,"—meaning, before it was fully light. It was at this early dawn that the disciples mentioned in the clause following left their lodgings, though they did not arrive at the sepulchre until sunrise. Mark xvi. 2. *Came Mary Magdalene*] Called Magdalene from being a resident of Magdala. *And the other Mary*] Mother of James and of Joses. Mark xvi. 1. To these two Marys Mark adds Salome, the mother of John. The object of these women, in thus visiting the sepulchre, was (Mark xvi. 1) to finish embalming the body of their beloved Master, for which purpose they had, or

2 And behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

the previous evening, purchased the necessary spices, which they had now brought with them. The reader should recollect that the sepulchres of the East are far more spacious than tombs are among us; they not unfrequently contain several apartments, around the sides of which are suitable niches or recesses—sometimes a sort of shelf—for the reception of the bodies.

Verse 2. *There was a great earthquake*] Not after the women arrived, but before. The margin very properly says “had been,” instead of “was.” This “earthquake” is supposed to have accompanied the descent of the angel, and to have been confined to the neighbourhood of the sepulchre. Its object was, doubtless, to aid in awing the guard. *The angel of the Lord*] Rather, *an angel*. *Rolled back the stone, and sat upon it*] By this means the soldiers would have a distinct view of the heavenly visitant. The time of the angel’s sitting on the stone seems to have been prior to the arrival of the women; for when they came they saw no one on the outside. We learn from Mark xvi. 3, 4, that the women had been in great perplexity, while on their way to the sepulchre, to know by what means this stone should be removed from the entrance: little did they think how God had provided them access to the sealed and guarded tomb.

Verse 3. *His countenance was like lightning*] Meaning, was of intense brightness. The word rendered “countenance” denotes, it is said, not so much the face,

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

as the whole figure or appearance. The resplendent brightness of the angel's aspect was probably heightened by the snowy or dazzling whiteness of his raiment. The celestial beings are usually represented as clothed in white, (Acts i. 10; Rev. iv. 4,) that being, among the Jews, the symbol of purity and love. The angel doubtless appeared to the keepers, as he afterward did to the women, in the form of a man. *For fear—the keepers became as dead men*] Were overwhelmed with terror—paralyzed. When the women arrived at the sepulchre, the guard, it would seem, had already departed; had it been otherwise, we presume some notice would have been taken of their presence. It further appears from John xx. 1, 2, that when the women arrived at the sepulchre, and saw the stone rolled away from its mouth, Mary Magdalene left the company, and ran and told Peter and John, saying, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him."

Verse 5. *The angel said, &c.*] The conversation here noted probably occurred within the sepulchre; for Mark says, that the women, on arriving at the place, entered the sepulchre, whereupon they saw, on the right side, "a young man sitting, clothed in a long, white garment." This "young man" was probably the angel here mentioned by Matthew. His unexpected presence and singular appearance greatly disturbed the women—Mark says they "were affrighted." The angel's soothing address was de-

6 He is not here ; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay :

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead ; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee ; there shall ye see him : lo, I have told you.

signed to remove their fears. Salome and Mary the mother of Joses only were present, Mary Magdalene having returned to the apostles. John xx. 1, 2.

Verse 6. *He is risen, as he said*] Commentators generally understand the expression, "as he said," as a mild reproof of these disciples for not having more clearly apprehended the Lord's repeated assertion that he would rise from the dead on the third day. The remark *may* have been so intended, but we think it much more likely that it was made to remind them of his promise, that by its recollection they might be cheered and comforted. *See the place, &c.*] The particular niche or cell in which the body had lain. The angel probably wished them to see this, together with the grave-clothes lying there, for their confirmation in the belief of Christ's resurrection.

Verse 7. *Go and tell his disciples*] Mark's statement is, (xvi. 7,) "his disciples and Peter." The angel had doubtless been instructed to send a *special* message to Peter, that he and others might know his penitence was accepted, his sin forgiven. *He goeth into Galilee*] This Jesus had, (shortly before his betrayal,) promised his disciples to do after his resurrection ; (Matt. xxvi. 32 ; Mark xiv. 28 ;) accordingly Mark represents the angel as reminding the women of this his promise by adding, "as he said unto you." *There shall ye see him*] Our Lord repeatedly appeared to one or more of his disciples at Jerusalem *before* he went into Galilee ; but it was in that province that he gave the most public manifestation

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, and did run to bring his disciples word.

JOHN XX. 3-18.

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

7 And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

of being "alive from the dead" that he anywhere made. See 1 Cor. xv. 6. Galilee was the northern part of the Holy Land.

Verse 8. *They departed—with fear and great joy*] This "fear" was probably of that kind which is properly termed *awe*—a sort of deep, reverential fear. This was chiefly occasioned, we presume, by the presence and converse of the angels. Their "great joy" was produced by the intelligence that Jesus was risen, and would soon show himself. Mark depicts the excited, confused state of their minds very graphically. See xvi. 8. It was soon after these women left the sepulchre that Peter and John came running to the spot, followed more leisurely by Mary Magdalene, as narrated John xx. 3-10, which see.

JOHN XX. 3-18.

Verses 8, 9. *Then went in that other disciple*] Meaning, it is supposed, John himself. *He saw, and believed*] This does not mean that he saw and therefore believed

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping : and, as she wept, she stooped down, *and looked* into the sepulchre,

the body was *missing*, but, that seeing the exact order of the grave-clothes, he believed that Jesus was indeed *risen from the dead*. And as if to apologize for his own dulness, and that of his fellow-disciples, in not having *looked* for this event, he adds, "As yet they knew not," or understood not, "the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." It was, therefore, not previous declarations, but the facts before his eyes, which forced conviction upon the mind of John that his Lord had indeed returned to life. Nor is the fact that John now credited this truth irreconcilable with Luke's subsequent statement of the unbelief of the apostles; (Luke xxiv. 11;) for the declaration that the statements of the women who had seen Christ and conversed with him, appeared to the apostles "as idle tales," may be understood of the apostles *generally*; or, it may be supposed that John made at this time no profession of his belief that Jesus had arisen, and was therefore presumed to be of the same mind as the others.—*Boyer's Conjectures, &c.* This visit of Peter and John must not be confounded with that later one made by Peter narrated Luke xxiv. 12.

Verses 11, 12. *Mary Magdalene stood without, &c.*] Being unwilling, apparently, to quit the spot. *Looked—and seeth two angels in white*] This is the first mention of *two* angels being present on this occasion. Whether or not Mary knew these to be angels is not stated, though the probability is that she deemed them to be

12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus nad lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

such. *Taken away my Lord, &c.*] This language shows that Mary had no more idea that Christ had risen than had the rest of the disciples. She supposed that the body had been removed, but by whom she knew not.

Verses 14, 15. *She turned herself back*] Dr. A. Clarke renders, *She was turned back*, that is, to return to Jerusalem. Others, however, take the passage to mean, *she turned herself round*, perhaps thinking that she heard a slight noise behind her, as of some one approaching. *Knew not it was Jesus*] Either because she did not view him attentively, or because his appearance was in some manner changed. Besides, believing Christ to be dead, she was altogether unprepared to recognise her Master. Mark explicitly declares (what John's account would lead us to infer) that the first manifestation Jesus made of himself to his followers, after his resurrection, was to Mary Magdalene. Mark xvi. 9. This was, probably, because she sought him more fervently than did any of the others. Her affection for Jesus appears to have been uncommonly strong. *Whom seekest thou?*] As Mary still remained ignorant who it was that questioned her, it is not unlikely that Jesus spoke these words in a different tone of voice from that which he ordinarily used, and unlike that he employed when he next addressed her. *Tell me where thou hast laid him*] Mary, it seems, thought the corpse had been removed by some friend,

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

with the knowledge and connivance, if not *assistance*, of the gardener; and she was anxious to know where. *I will take him away*] Will have him removed to a suitable place of burial.

Verses 16, 17. *Jesus saith—Mary*] His familiarly addressing her by name, as one who was well acquainted with her, and that in a tone of voice to which she had long been accustomed, at once convinced her that it was Jesus who was speaking to her. *She saith—Rabboni*] This exclamation is to be understood both as an expression of Mary's joy, and an acknowledgment of Christ as her Lord and Master. As she spoke this, or immediately thereafter, she probably prostrated herself before him, and laid hold of him. *Touch me not*] Embrace me not.—*Bloomfield*. "Rather," says Wesley, "Do not cling to me." *For I am not yet ascended, &c.*] Meaning, the commentators say, "I am not now ascending; that is, not going to ascend."—*Bloomfield*, and others. This is assigned as a reason why Mary should not now hang on or cling to him—not spend time in giving utterance to her emotions of joy, but hasten to communicate to the "brethren" the intelligence of their Lord's resurrection. *I ascend unto my Father, and your Father*] The present tense is used for the future—*Shall by*
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18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* he had spoken these things unto her.

MATT. xxviii. 9-15.

9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell

and by ascend. By this message Jesus doubtless intended to bring to mind the promises he had made them the evening on which he instituted his supper—such as, that he would return to the Father to prepare a place for them—would send them the Comforter, and the like. From the next verse we learn that Mary Magdalene went and told the disciples “that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.”

The next incidents connected with the resurrection of our Lord are, his appearance to Salome and Mary the mother of James, the return and story of the guard, &c., as narrated Matt. xxviii. 9-15, to which the reader's attention is now required.

MATT. xxviii. 9-15.

Verses 9, 10. *As they went*] As Salome and Mary were going to the disciples. *All hail*] The word “all” is not in the original, and is unnecessarily added by our translators. The word “hail” is a sort of friendly salutation, equivalent to wishing one health, prosperity, and good of every kind.—*Bloomfield.* *They held him by the feet*] Prostrated themselves before him and clasped his feet, after the manner of suppliants, as though claiming his protection. *Worshipped him*] Paid him homage, or reverential respect. We presume this is not to be understood

my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

11 Now, when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

of divine worship. *Be not afraid*] From this expression we may infer that the women were somewhat alarmed. Perhaps a feeling of solemn awe filled hearts.

Verse 11. *When they were going*] While Salome and Mary were on their way to the apostles. *Some of the watch came into the city, &c.*] Some of the "watch," or guard, which had been placed at the sepulchre. We presume they had left the tomb before the women visited it; though where they had been until now does not appear. *Showed—the things that were done*] Informed the priests of the descent of the angel, the earthquake, opening of the sepulchre, &c.

Verses 12, 13. *When they*] The soldiers. *Were assembled with the elders*] With the sanhedrim, of which body a special meeting seems to have been called, for the purpose of considering the report of the guard, and of determining what should be done in the matter. This consultation was doubtless an anxious one; for the council could not fail to perceive that if the report which the disciples of Christ would certainly raise, that Jesus was risen from the dead, should gain credence with the people, all their deep and malignant plans would recoil upon themselves, and that the very means they had adopted to prevent the report being believed would go far to establish it. In this dilemma they bribe the soldiers to propagate the absurd falsehood that his disciples

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him *away* while we slept.

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught : and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

LUKE xxiv. 13-43.

13 And behold, two of them went that same day to a

had stolen him while they slept ; at the same time promising to secure them from punishment should Pilate hear of it. By the Roman law it was death for a soldier to sleep on his post. *Large money*] Much money—a large amount.

Verses 14, 15. *We will persuade him*] Persuade him not to punish—appease him. This they might do either by entreaties or gifts. Or, they might do it by representing the falsehood to be a stroke of good policy, as being likely to bring the report of Christ's resurrection into disrepute, and thus, perhaps, prevent a revolt, which they might not unreasonably apprehend should the belief of his resurrection and Messiahship (as they understood that Messiahship) gain ground. *This saying is commonly reported, &c.*] Meaning, the disappearance of the body is thus accounted for. Strange that so ridiculous a tale should be credited. "Until this day," has, of course, reference to the time when Matthew wrote his Gospel—perhaps some thirty or forty years after the ascension of Jesus.

LUKE xxiv. 13-43.

Verses 13, 14. *Two of them*] Two of the disciples : one of these was Cleopas ; (ver. 18 :) who the other was is unknown. *Went that same day*] The day of the

village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about threescore furlongs*.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But their eyes were holden, that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communi-

resurrection—the first day of the week. *To Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem threescore furlongs*] Or between seven and eight miles. Its location cannot now be determined. There is in Palestine also another Emmaus, commonly called Nicopolis, which, according to Professor Robinson, lies from Jerusalem about a hundred and sixty furlongs, in a north-western direction. *They talked—of all these things*] Of the wonders attending the crucifixion and resurrection.

Verses 15, 16. *While they communed, &c.*] Or talked with each other. They perhaps “communed and reasoned” on the probable truth of the intelligence communicated by the women, and what was to be done in the present state of things. *Jesus drew near*] Mark says, (xvi. 12,) “in another form;” that is, not bearing the same countenance as formerly, but with changed features.—*Bloomfield*. *Their eyes were holden*] That is, they were prevented recognising him. This was, perhaps, effected by a supernatural agency. “God,” says Ripley, “was designing to impart to their minds some new views of his word; and this could be best done by not letting them at once know who their companion was.”

Verse 17. *What manner of communications, &c.*]

cations *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was

Meaning, What is the nature of the communications ye make one to another? The original denotes that they were engaged in earnest discussion. From the closing remark—"and are sad"—we may infer that their countenance and air were dejected and sorrowful. Some commentators think that there is an omission, in this clause, of the words *why* and *ye*—"And *why* are *ye* sad?"

Verse 18. *Cleopas*] Same as Alpheus; the father of James and Joses. *Art thou only a stranger, &c.*] Meaning, Art thou such a stranger as not to know the things which have so lately happened? The phraseology implies surprise at his seeming ignorance of the crucifixion of Christ, and of the astonishing occurrences by which it was accompanied: from which we may reasonably infer that they had excited much attention in the city.

Verses 19, 20. *He (Jesus) said, What things?*] This ignorance was assumed by our Lord in order to give him the better opportunity of instructing these his followers in the true meaning of those passages of holy writ which treated of his sacrificial death and glorious resurrection. *Concerning Jesus—which was a prophet mighty in deed and word, &c.*] That is, who was a teacher of great excellence, as was manifest both by the

a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people :

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel : and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

wondrous works he performed, and by the ennobling and spiritual instruction he communicated. They did not call him the Messiah, probably because they now doubted, in consequence of his death, whether he was the Christ. *Before God and the people*] Meaning, perhaps, one to whom both God and men—referring especially to the populace—bore testimony. Was manifestly and undoubtedly “a prophet.” *The chief priests and our rulers*] That is, the chief priests and *other* rulers, for the chief priests were “rulers.” *Have crucified him*] They are charged with having done this, because they procured its being done.

Verse 21. *We*] Not only himself and companion, but all the followers of Jesus. *Trusted it had been he which should have redeemed Israel*] Equivalent to saying, We had deemed him to be the Messiah. The *redemption* referred to was chiefly deliverance from the yoke of foreign bondage. *Besides all this*] In addition to the wonders attendant on the crucifixion of Christ. *To-day is the third day, &c.*] The narration of Cleopas is here exceedingly confused. He makes allusions to apparently important facts, yet explains them not : and talks more like a man reasoning with himself than as one who is giving a relation to others. There seems to be a vague, uncertain expectation of something astonishing occurring on this “third” day, yet mixed with much of fear and doubt. “His own hopes and fears,” observes Dr. Clarke,

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre ;

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said : but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken !

“ he cannot help mixing with his narration, and throwing over the whole that confusion that dwells in his own heart.” This is, however, all *natural*, and greatly adds to the evidence of the truth of Scripture :—for in a forgery such a style would not have been thought of.

Verses 22-24. *Certain women, &c.*] Reference is doubtless here had to the report of the women noticed in the early part of this chapter. (See verses 1-9.) By their having seen “ a vision of angels,” is meant that angels had appeared to them, and furnished them with the information here cited. *Certain of them which were with us, &c.*] The allusion in this case is probably to Peter, the account of whose second visit to the sepulchre is given verse 12.

Verses 25, 26. *O fools*] That is, *misjudging* or *stupid* men. The original word is not of the same import as that prohibited by Christ in Matt. v. 22, though our translators have unhappily rendered both words by the same term. The forbidden phrase implies a feeling of contempt or maliciousness ; this of mere dulness. *Slow of heart to believe*] Backward to believe—that is, to believe what the prophets had spoken concerning the death of Christ. This is a strengthening of the former phrase, and intimates that the stupidity therein reproved

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

arose out of a criminal lack of faith. *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things*] Was it not necessary, according to the prophets, that he should? The thing was clearly predicted by the prophets, and explicitly asserted by himself, and yet they comprehended not the meaning of either, but imagined he would show himself to be a great temporal prince. Well might he say of them, O misjudging men, backward to understand and believe! The question, "Ought not," &c., may be understood as an affirmation that he "ought" thus to have suffered, and "enter into his glory,"—the "glory" of the Mediatorial reign, which could be entered on in no other way.

Versc 27. *He expounded unto them, in all the scriptures, &c.*] That is, in the scriptures of the Old Testament. We presume he explained to them the various symbols and direct predictions which related to the death of the Messiah; showing them their misconceptions of his true character and office, and that his death was so far from being an evidence against the Messiahship of Jesus, that, taken in connection with all its circumstances, it abundantly strengthened and confirmed his claim. It is not to be supposed, however, that he applied these things *to himself*, but (as though he were another person) to Jesus: for had he applied them to himself, they would have known him to be Christ. A strong conviction that Jesus was the Christ was doubtless thus wrought in their minds, and "caused their hearts to burn" with

28 And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them.

holy joy. Mr. Barnes says that "the word *beginning* should be separated from what follows, as it denotes simply that he commenced his discourse; thus—'And commencing his discourse, or replying to them, he expounded from Moses and the prophets;' that is, from the books of Moses and of the prophets, &c., &c."

Verse 28. *They drew nigh to the village*] To Emmanus. *He made as though, &c.*] He acted as if he were going on. There is in this no ground for a charge of dissimulation; for doubtless Jesus would have "gone further" had he not been requested by these disciples to remain with them. His prescience, to be sure, was unerring, and he therefore *knew* they would invite him to stay; but he wished the invitation to be given, and acted as if he meant to continue his journey, that they might have the opportunity of asking him to remain.

Verse 29. *They constrained him*] That is, *pressed* or *importuned* him. "They did not yet perceive," says Mr. Barnes, "that it was Jesus, but they had been charmed and delighted with his discourse, and they wished to hear him further, and to show him kindness." *He went in to tarry with them*] As they supposed, for the night.

Verse 30. *As he sat at meat*] When about to partake

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked to us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

of the meal which had been provided—probably supper. *He took bread, and blessed, &c.*] This was the office of the master or head of the family, unless he chose to decline it in favour of some one else. Whether or not Jesus was asked to perform these duties does not appear; but the probability is, that he voluntarily assumed them, (as he appears always to have done in the apostolic family,) designing thus to draw their attention to himself. There is nothing in the original answering to the “it” after “blessed:”—the meaning of the passage seems to be, that he blessed God, and gave thanks to him for the food. How many professedly Christian heads of families fail to imitate their Saviour in this reasonable and pious duty!

Verse 31. *Their eyes were opened*] That is, the supernatural influence which had prevented their recognising Jesus was withdrawn; in consequence of which, “they knew him.” *He vanished out of their sight*] This seems to have been immediately after they had discovered who their guest was.

Verse 32. *Did not our heart burn, &c.*] Meaning, that their hearts did glow with rapture. The expression denotes the deep interest and pleasure they felt in Christ’s discourse, even while they knew not who it was that addressed them. Thank God, this is not true of them alone. All the true followers of Jesus know how precious and comforting are the communications of his Spirit, and how the heart glows with intense affection

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

35 And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

when he sheds abroad therein his love. *Opened the scriptures*] Explained, illustrated, or enforced them, as the case might be. Doubtless they that day received a far better understanding of them than they ever before possessed.

Verses 33, 34. *They rose the same hour, &c.*] Here was disinterested joy. Though the day was waning, they doubtless weary, and Jerusalem seven and a half miles distant, they hasten to communicate to their fellow-disciples the joyful tidings of their having seen and conversed with the Master. *Found the eleven*] So the apostles were frequently designated after the death of Judas. There could not, however, have been more than ten of them present on this occasion, for Thomas we know was absent. *Saying, The Lord is risen*] The apostles, or some of those present with them, said this to the two from Emmaus. *Hath appeared to Simon*] To Simon Peter. From a comparison of this passage with 1 Cor. xv. 5, it appears tolerably certain that this was the first appearance of Christ to an apostle since his resurrection. It is somewhat singular that it is not circumstantially related by any of the evangelists.

Verses 35, 36. *They told what things were done*] Meaning, what conversation took place. *How he was known of them*] Recognised by them. *As they thus*

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

spuke] While giving in their report. *Jesus stood in the midst, &c.*] John says, (xx. 19,) that the doors of the house in which the disciples were assembled were "shut;" by which is meant that they were secured by bolts or bars. That this is the import is clear from the reason assigned—"for fear of the Jews." How, then, did Jesus obtain admittance? Some think that he suddenly manifested himself in the midst of the company, the door and fastenings remaining secure. We think it more likely that, as in the case of Peter, recorded Acts xii. 10, the door opened as of itself; that is, was opened by an unseen power, and that entrance was thus furnished. The compiler thinks it probable that this is the same manifestation as Mark alludes to, (xvi. 14;) though Townsend and other harmonizers conceive that visit to be the same with the one noticed John xx. 26, and to have taken place one week later.

Verse 37. *Supposed they had seen a spirit*] A mere phantom or apparition, and not a real body. They were consequently alarmed; but Jesus, to convince them of the reality of his resurrection, and of the identity of his body, showed them his hands and his feet, (verse 39,) which bore the marks of the nails:—John says, (xx. 20,) "he showed them his hands and his side," as pierced by the soldier's spear. The probability is, that he exhibited his hands, his feet, and his side. He thus furnished them evidence that it was no phantom which stood before them, but truly their Master himself. The "thoughts" which Jesus here reproves the disciples for allowing, are

39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40 And when he had thus spoken, he showed them *his* hands and *his* feet.

41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honey-comb.

43 And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

supposed to be *doubts* or suspicions. The same word is thus used in 1 Tim. ii. 8. *Handle me*] Touch me, feel of me. He appeals both to the sense of sight and of touch—two of the most certain means of perception belonging to man. *A spirit hath not flesh and bones, &c.*] In this remark our Lord assumes the existence of disembodied spirits, which he surely would not have done had the belief of their existence been an error and delusion.

Verses 41–43. *They believed not for joy*] That is, the occurrence was of so felicitous and unlooked-for a nature, that they could scarcely credit the evidence of their own senses. A sort of doubt that they might still be under a delusion mixed itself with their joy. As we sometimes say, it seemed “too good to be true.” John takes no notice of this state of mingled joy and doubt, but simply says that the disciples “were glad when they saw the Lord:”—that is, when they were satisfied, from the evidences furnished, that he was really risen from the dead. *Have ye any meat?*] Rather, *have ye any food?* for the original does not denote animal food merely, but eatables of every kind. *Honey-comb*] This was a frequent article of food among the ancients, especially with those who studied abstemiousness of diet; and the country abounded

JOHN XX. 21-25.

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you : as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost :

with it. *He did eat before them*] This he did, that he might further convince them that he was a real living person, and to dispel all remaining doubt from their minds.

JOHN XX. 21-25.

Verse 21. *Peace be unto you*] This phrase (as is evident from its occurrence at the beginning and toward the close of this present interview) was a Hebrew form of salutation both on meeting and parting. *As my Father hath sent me, so, &c.*] Equivalent to declaring, that as *he* was commissioned and sent by the Father to make known to men his will, so would he commission and send them as *his* ambassadors : investing them, also, with the power to send forth their own successors. So far the office and work of Christ and the apostles were similar, and consequently Jesus might consistently say, *As the Father sent me, so send I you*—in like manner and for the like object—to proclaim his gospel. But Christ was also sent for many most important objects which could have no parallel with the sending the apostles :—of course he must not be understood to speak of those *peculiar* objects of his mission.

Verses 22, 23. *He breathed on them*] This we are to regard as a symbolical action, by which our Lord was pleased to confirm and illustrate the promise just made ; showing them that they would be fitted for their great work by the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit. *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*] We are not to suppose that

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

they did *now* receive "the Holy Ghost;" but are to take our Lord's words in the sense of a promise that they soon should be favoured with his influences. Accordingly they were given on the day of Pentecost. Acts i. 4; ii. 1, &c., &c. *Whose soever sins ye remit, &c.*] "Remit" has the sense of *forgive*; "retain," to *leave unpardoned*. This declaration is not to be understood as an investiture of the apostles with absolute power to remit or retain sins, but that they should be taught by the Holy Ghost to set forth the *terms* on which forgiveness would be granted. As this authority was connected with, and dependant on, the perfect inspiration of the apostles, it would seem that it was confined to them, and did not descend to their successors. If so, what becomes of the arrogant claims of the Romish priesthood? See further on Matt. xvi. 19, and xviii. 18. Having thus spoken, our Lord seems to have taken his departure.

Verses 24, 25. *Thomas—called Didymus*] "Didymus" is a Greek name of the same import as Thomas—both signifying a twin. *Except I shall put my finger into the print, &c.*] Rather, "on the print." Thomas's unbelief arose not from any doubt of the veracity of his fellow-apostles, but from an opinion that they had been *deceived* in some manner. It seems, however, to have

LESSON XXV.

[A. D. 30.

Christ appears to the eleven, Thomas being present, who acknowledges him to be his Lord and his God—He afterward shows himself to, and converses with, a large number of his disciples on a mountain in Galilee—His subsequent appearance to, and conversation with, the apostles by the sea of Tiberias.—Matt. xxviii. 16–20; Mark xvi. 14; John xx. 26–29; xxi. 24.

JOHN XX. 26–29.

AND after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. *Then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, *Peace be unto you.*

been unreasonable; for *ten* apostles, and we know not how many other disciples, were present, and testified that they had *seen* and *conversed with* their Lord: but he would not be convinced except by the evidence of his own senses. The “slowness of heart” of all the disciples to believe the resurrection of Christ, and their ultimate hearty reception of this glorious truth, is greatly in favour of its certainty, because it demonstrates that they were not imposed on, and only yielded their assent on the fullest conviction.

NOTES ON JOHN XX. 26–29.

Verse 26. *After eight days, &c.*] “Eight days” after that appearance of Christ to the disciples recorded in the nineteenth verse of this chapter. The sacred writers frequently reckon time *inclusively*—that is, they include both extremes: (see, for instance, Matt. xxvii. 63, “after

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

three days I will rise again:") if this were done here, as it doubtless was, the day on which Jesus now appeared was the first day of the week—our Sunday, and just one week after his resurrection. In all likelihood the disciples were now assembled for religious worship. *Thomas was with them*] Which it will be recollected he was not on the occasion of our Lord's former appearance. (See verse 24.) He was the only apostle who had not seen Christ since his resurrection. It is supposed that the disciples were assembled in the same house, and probably in the same room, as when Jesus last manifested himself to them. It is furthermore conjectured that this was the room in which our Lord instituted his supper, and in which the disciples were assembled when the Holy Ghost descended upon them. Compare Mark xiv. 15, with Acts i. 13, and iv. 31.

Verse 27. *Reach hither thy finger, &c.*] This language was probably employed as a rebuke of Thomas for his incredulity. The reader will recollect that that apostle had declared he would not credit the fact of Jesus's resurrection unless he had the most convincing and undeniable evidence of its truth—"Except," said he, "I shall put my finger in (or *on*) the print of the nails," &c., "I will not believe." The Saviour invites him to the very proof he had desired, and which he had declared would alone be satisfactory. There is no reason to suppose, however, that the apostle did actually thus examine the body of our Lord; for his unbelief seems to have given way before the ocular demonstration with which he was

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

now furnished. How condescending it was in the Saviour thus to accommodate himself to the weakness of his disciple!

Verse 28. *My Lord and my God*] A direct, explicit avowal of belief in the divinity of Christ. This is the first time in which the title "God" is applied to Jesus by any of his apostles, and was now given from the fullest conviction of its truth and applicability. Some, indeed, have endeavoured to resolve the remark into a strong exclamation of surprise, as we sometimes (though very improperly) say, My God! but this interpretation is refuted by the statement of the evangelist—"Thomas *said unto him.*"

Verse 29. *Because thou hast seen me, &c.*] This language seems to convey a *slight* approval of Thomas for having yielded his assent to the proof adduced; accompanied, however, by a qualified rebuke of his unreasonable skepticism in not having believed the testimony of so many witnesses, and for having stubbornly insisted that he would not be satisfied unless by the evidence of his own senses. By the expression, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," our Lord is to be understood, not as approving inconsiderate credulity, but that kind of faith which believes on reasonable evidence—that belief of heart which neither rests on mere assumption nor makes arrogant demands.

MATT. xxviii. 16-20.

16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him : but some doubted.

MATT. xxviii. 16-20.

Verse 16. *Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee*] For the purpose of meeting Jesus. This seems to have been after the appearance to the disciples above noticed, and consequently more than a week after the resurrection. *Into a mountain Jesus had appointed*] What "mountain" this was is not known, the evangelist having omitted to designate the place. We are not to suppose, that because no other of the disciples are mentioned but the "eleven," that they were the only persons who went:—the probability is, that a large number of other disciples accompanied them. If, as is likely, this was the same appearance as that referred to by Paul 1 Cor. xv. 6, it was the most public manifestation of himself which our Lord gave after his resurrection, being witnessed by more than five hundred persons.

Verse 17. *When they saw him*] When they saw Jesus. *They worshipped him*] The character of this worship—whether such adoration as is justly paid to God or not—must be determined from the circumstances of the case. And here it may be well to remark, that since the resurrection the disciples seem to pay a greater reverence to Christ than they had before done. The wonderful circumstances attending on and following his death and resurrection—especially those appertaining to the latter—could not fail to impress their minds with a belief of his superhuman character. It seems to have been this which drove Thomas to the acknowledgment of the divinity of

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing

Christ; and our Lord's reception of the high title bestowed on him by that apostle would be very likely to lead the other apostles to a similar conclusion. The "worship" now paid undoubtedly was, therefore, divine homage. *But some doubted*] It is thought that the cause of this "doubt" was, the indistinct view they at first had of Jesus; whereupon he "came and spake unto them," as stated in the following verse; on which their doubts vanished.

Verse 18. *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth**] Our Lord's dominion comprehends, therefore, angels, men, and devils. "All power" means rule of every kind—unlimited authority and power. It is in his character of Mediator—as God and man united—that this sway is said to be "given" to Christ; as *mere* man he could never have received or exercised it, for ability to govern heaven and earth belongs only to God; Christ, therefore, is God.

Verse 19. *Go ye therefore*] "Therefore" has the sense of *inasmuch* or *because*. The connection of these words with the preceding is highly important; for the command to "go" is, by the use of the word "therefore," expressly based on the *power* and *authority* of Jesus before asserted: and of course implies not only his right to com-

* Mr. Townsend, and the harmonizers generally, suppose these words to have been spoken on the day of the ascension, and arrange accordingly. But the connection between them and the preceding matter is so close, that the compiler has ventured to depart from these respected authorities, and to run the account on. In doing this, however, he is not alone; having the countenance of Mr. Greswell.

them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I

mand obedience, but also the exertion of his power to defend and save. *Teach all nations*] The word rendered "teach," here, is not the one that is usually so translated in the New Testament. *This* word properly means, to *disciple*, or *make disciples of*, all nations:—that is, to convert them to the belief of his doctrines. This, however, is instrumentally effected by teaching them the gospel, and persuading them to receive it. *Baptizing them*] The "baptism" spoken of is the application of water to a believer in Christ (as an emblem of the purifying influences of the Holy Spirit) in the name of the Holy Trinity. *In the name of the Father, &c.*] "In the name of" does not here mean *by the authority of*, but simply *unto* the Father, &c.; just as the expression "believing *on* the name of Christ" has the same import as "believing *on* Christ." To be baptized *unto* any one, is publicly to acknowledge him our teacher or lawgiver;—to avow our belief of his system, and to promise obedience to it. It was in this sense that the Jews were said to be "baptized *unto* Moses." 1 Cor. x. 2. The union of the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in this solemn dedicatory rite, shows them to be of equal authority—to be equally God—and as such to be, as Mr. Watson expresses the idea, "the common object of trust, obedience, and worship, and the source of blessing."

Verse 20. *Teaching them to observe all—I have commanded*] Instructing them in the duties and doctrines of the Christian religion:—a very important part of ministerial duty. It follows, of course, that if it be the

have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

JOHN xxi. 1-24.

1 After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise showed he *himself*.

duty of the pastor to instruct, it is no less so of the people to learn: and that disciple of Jesus who does not diligently strive to know and do all that his Master has enjoined upon him, is disobedient to his Lord. *I am with you alway*] That is, by his spiritual presence. As ubiquity (or the power of being everywhere present at one and the same time) belongs only to God, Jesus must, being thus present, be God. The particular *objects* of our Lord's presence here contemplated are, to aid and comfort his ministering servants, and to give efficacy to their labours: and he doubtless meant this promise should serve as an encouragement to them in the prosecution of their work. Without this presence and aid, their efforts would ever have remained fruitless. *Unto the end of the world*] To the end of time. This shows that the promise was not designed to be confined to the apostles, but to extend to all true Christian ministers, to the world's end.

JOHN xxi. 1-24.

Verse 1. *After these things*] After the manifestations recorded in the previous chapter, with *special reference* to that at which Thomas was present. *Jesus showed himself again at the sea of Tiberias*] Sometimes called, also, the sea of Galilee, (John vi. 1,) and lake of Genesaret. Luke v. 1. This sheet of water laves the eastern shore of Galilee for some twelve miles; its southern

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

point being opposite to Tarichea, and its northern extremity a little above Tell Hum. *On this wise*] In the manner following.

Verses 2-4. *Nathanael*] Supposed to be the same as Bartholomew. This was the man whom Christ, in the early part of his ministry, honoured by declaring to be "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." John i. 47. *The two sons of Zebedee*] James and John. Who the two were whose names are not mentioned is not known. We presume that the disciples—at least some of them—had again taken to their old occupation of fishing, as a means of support until the time should come when the Master would send them forth to proclaim his gospel: "they seem," says Tittman, "to have been dubious about the plans of their future life:—it was therefore natural for them to return to their old dwellings, and have recourse to their former occupations." Their example may teach us that industry is always to be preferred to idleness, and that the pursuit of an honest calling is never disgraceful. *That night they caught nothing*] This was so ordered in the providence of God, that the miracle which followed might appear the more remarkable. *Knew not that it was Jesus*] Either because the distance and indistinct light prevented their recognising him, or because he had in some way disguised himself.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore; and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now, when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his* fisher's coat unto *him*, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

Verse 5. *Children*] A term of kindness or affability sometimes employed by elderly persons or superiors to their inferiors, or to younger people. *Any meat?*] The original is said to denote any thing eaten with bread, and especially fish. Bloomfield cites authority to show that it was "a phrase employed by those who inquired of fishers or hunters *what they had taken.*"

Verse 6. *Cast the net on the right side*] Not "right" as opposed to *wrong*, but "the right side" as opposed to the *left* side. *They cast, &c.*] It does not appear that the disciples yet recognised Jesus: probably they supposed him to be some experienced fisherman, who knew the favourite resort of the finny prey, and therefore yielded to his suggestion.

Verse 7. *It is the Lord*] This John perhaps inferred from the prodigious draught, and from the recollection of that similar one in the early part of Christ's public ministry mentioned Luke v. 6, 10. It may be, too, that the thought that the stranger might possibly be Jesus led him to scrutinize his person more closely, and by this means all uncertainty may have vanished. *Peter—girt his fisher's coat unto him*] This "fisher's coat" does not appear to have been the ordinary inner or outer garment: but is supposed to have been a sort of linen frock without

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full

sleeves, reaching only to the knees, and bound round the middle by a belt. This "coat" Peter now put on, and "girded" or fastened it round him by the belt. *He was naked*] Probably not entirely so; but merely clothed in his tunic, or under garment. Among the Jews, when a person was divested of his upper robe he was said to be naked. *Cast himself into the sea*] The boat was now, in all likelihood, in shallow water; and Peter "cast himself into the sea," not to swim, for the "coat" would have been an incumbrance, but to wade hastily to the shore. He was impelled to this act, we presume, by the natural impetuosity of his disposition, not by a greater degree of affection to his Master than the others possessed.

Verses 8, 9. *Two hundred cubits*] Probably about one hundred yards. *Fire of coals, and fish laid thereon*] There can be no reason to doubt that the fire and food were provided by Christ, and that in a *miraculous* manner. His *design* in this does not clearly appear; perhaps it may have been intended to teach the lesson, that he had both the will and the power abundantly to provide for the subsistence of his followers.

Verse 11. *Peter went up*] Mr. Wesley renders, "went on board:" which seems to be what is meant. *Drew the net to land*] Not alone, but aided the others to draw it to shore. From the manner in which this draught is spoken of, it seems to have been regarded as an uncommonly

of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come *and* dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead.

15 So, when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?

great haul. "We may observe that the fish being not only numerous, but *all large*, made the miracle the more conspicuous."—*Bloomfield*.

Verse 12. *Jesus saith, Come and dine*] The original word is used sometimes to denote the morning's meal; what we should call *breakfast*. The apostles, it will be recollected, had been fishing all night, and it was now morning. *None durst ask, Who art thou?*] Campbell renders, "None ventured to ask;" as deeming it too familiar, and therefore improper. "Ever since the confession of Thomas," observes Dr. Clarke, "a proper awe of the deity of Christ had possessed their minds." We think that the disciples manifested an increased reverence for the Saviour ever since his resurrection. It was not, then, merely because they *knew* this to be Jesus that they feared to ask him, but especially because of the high degree of reverence with which they now regarded him.

Verse 14. *This is the third time that Jesus showed himself, &c.*] Meaning, probably, either the third time recorded in this Gospel, or the third time of showing himself to his disciples collectively. If the latter be the signification, this appearance must have been prior to the manifestation narrated Matt. xxviii. 16, 17.

Verses 15-17. *Lovest thou me more than these?*]

He saith unto him, Yea, Lord ; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

Meaning, we think, "more than do *these apostles*?" Some, however, understand the reference to be to the things around—such as, the net, boat, &c.: in this sense the meaning would be, "Lovest thou me more than thou dost *these things*?"—that is, Dost thou prefer my service to any worldly advantage? The former interpretation seems the more plausible one. Possibly our Lord had reference, in this question, to the boast which Peter had made of superior devotion to him and steadfastness in his service: (Matt. xxvi. 33:) and meant his query as a tender admonition to his zealous, but unguarded servant, to be more distrustful of himself. *Yea—thou knowest that I love thee*] This seems to be the language of an honest, devoted, but humble man. There is in it nothing of boasting—no overrating of himself—but a sincere confession of strong attachment. *Feed my lambs*] Jesus speaks here as a shepherd, and addresses Peter as if he were an under-shepherd, charged with the duty of providing pasture for the flock. By "lambs" are meant the less advanced, as distinguished from the more experienced Christian professors, spoken of in the following verse as "sheep." The word translated "feed," in this verse, is said to denote the *providing* suitable *nutriment*; while that so rendered in verse 16 imports rather the *care, guidance, and government* of the flock. So Markland says, "The *young ones* of the flock are to be *fed* by the Good Shepherd; the *grown ones* to be *governed and fed*." Since the Lord Jesus manifested such interest for his "lambs"—the children and youth of the church—as to make their proper training and nourishment the subject of a *separate charge*, we ear-

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

nestly entreat the pastors of the flock not to be negligent of their duty; but diligently to "feed" the lambs: and we are certain that in so doing they will no less consult the true interests of the church than act in accordance with the injunctions of Christ. To the dear youth we would also say, If it be the duty of the Christian minister to instruct you in the knowledge of God, it is equally your duty to attend to those instructions, and to love and respect those whom God has appointed to watch over you.

Verse 17. *Third time*] It is supposed that Jesus put his question thrice, either because Peter had three times denied him, or to impress the importance of the admonition the more deeply on the heart of this apostle, and on the hearts of his fellows. It is likely that the inquiries were not put in rapid succession; but that there was a considerable interval between the answering one question and the putting of another. The language, though addressed to Peter, is to be regarded as intended for all the apostles. *Thou knowest all things*] He was therefore aware of the sincerity of Peter's profession, and of the extent of his love. The openness and boldness of this appeal is highly characteristic of the speaker. *Feed my sheep*] Peter's properly and carefully *feeding* the

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not.

flock was to be an evidence of his love to Jesus:—what will the Master say to such as assume this office less to “feed the flock” than to indulge themselves?

Verse 18. *When thou wast young thou girdest thyself, &c.*] Meaning, that he was not under personal constraint—not deprived of freedom. It is thought by some that our Lord is not to be understood as referring merely to Peter’s early life, but to the past and *present*:—as though he had said, Hitherto thou hast acted freely, voluntarily—girding thyself when thou wouldest. The reader will recollect that Peter had but a short time before “girt his fisher’s coat unto him,” and leaving the vessel, had waded to the shore to join his beloved Master. Perhaps this little circumstance gave occasion for the present remark. *But when thou shalt be old—another shall gird thee*] Intimating that his personal liberty would be greatly restricted, and he subjected to the will of others: who would “gird” or bind him. The expression, “thou shalt stretch forth thy hands,” is supposed to denote both the mode of Peter’s death—crucifixion—and his willingness to suffer. *Carry thee whither thou wouldest not*] This does not mean, we presume, that the apostle would be opposed to martyrdom; but is to be taken in contradistinction to the freedom spoken of before. The words may, however, imply that Peter would not have voluntarily chosen to be a martyr, though perfectly willing to become one when called to it of God.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

21 Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?

Verse 19. *Signifying by what death he should glorify God*] Should honour him. The martyrdom of Peter had a tendency to promote the glory of God among men, by giving strong evidence of his conviction of the truth of the gospel, and by the manifestation of that divine assistance which enabled him to meet a painful death not only calmly, but triumphantly. Although our Lord's words are somewhat enigmatical, it would seem from the context that Peter gathered enough of their import to learn that they contained an intimation that he would die a violent death. More than this does not appear. The apostle is said to have been crucified at Rome some thirty or thirty-four years afterward. *Follow me*] Possibly for the purpose of more private and full information on the event to which he had already referred. Most commentators understand these words to import that Peter should "follow" Jesus in the manner of his death—that is, should die by crucifixion. That apostle seems to have understood the injunction literally.

Verses 20, 21. *Peter, turning about, &c.*] He was probably going after Jesus, in obedience to his command, when, "turning about," he perceived that John also was following. *What shall this man do*] That is, say the commentators, What shall be the fate of this man—what death shall he die.

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee? Follow thou me.

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, if I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee?

24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true.

Verses 22, 23. *If I will that he tarry, &c.*] Meaning, If I will that he remain *alive*—that is nothing to thee. The “coming” here alluded to is thought by some to denote Christ’s advent, at the end of the world, to gather to himself his faithful servants; others take it of the judgments sent on the Jews, especially in the destruction of their metropolis. The former view has the most supporters.—The reader will not understand Jesus as saying that John *would* “tarry;” but merely as declaring that *if* it were his will this should be the case, it would be none of Peter’s business. The whole wears the air of a pointed, though gentle rebuke of the last-named apostle for his curiosity, which curiosity we must therefore consider ill-timed and officious. *Among the brethren*] Not the apostles, but the early Christians generally; at least the Asiatic portion of the believers. Their opinion that John would not die may have arisen from a misconception of Christ’s words, strengthened by the fact that this disciple is said to have survived all the other apostles and was known to be leading a peaceful life at Ephesus long after they were thought to have won the martyr’s crown. The mistake John deemed it proper to correct before he died, which he has done in the record under consideration.

Verse 24. *This is the disciple which testifieth*] That

LESSON XXVI.

[A. D. 31.

Christ again appears to his apostles at Jerusalem, and promises them the baptism of the Holy Ghost—Explains to them the necessity and advantage of his death and resurrection—Leads them out to Bethany; commissions them to preach his gospel in all the world, promising to be with them; blesses them; and visibly ascends up to heaven—The conclusion of the gospel history.—Mark xvi. 15-20; Luke xxiv. 44-53; John xx. 30, 31; xxi. 25; Acts i. 4-12.

ACTS i. 4, 5.

AND, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem,

is, the disciple of whom it was said, "if I will that he tarry," is he which testifies these things. That disciple was John, to whom this Gospel has ever been attributed. *We know his testimony is true*] This may either mean (by a change from the singular to the plural form) that John himself knew these statements to be correct, or that they were known to be so by the apostles and early Christians.

NOTES ON ACTS i. 4, 5.

Luke, in his introduction to the Acts of the Apostles, makes particular mention of one fact which is but barely glanced at in the Gospels—namely, that prior to the ascension of Christ, though apparently after the interview between Jesus and the apostles beside the sea of Tiberias, our Lord manifested himself to the disciples at Jerusalem. As the apostles seem to have been all present on this

but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

occasion, (which may have been early on the day of the ascension,) it is reasonable to suppose that Jesus had appointed to meet them at this time and place; and that the appointment was made either at the interview mentioned John xxi., or at some later visit of which the evangelists have given us no record.

Verses 4, 5. *He commanded they should not depart from Jerusalem*] That is, not until they were "endued with power from on high." Luke xxiv. 49. *But wait for the promise of the Father*] For the fulfilment of the Father's promise to "pour out his Spirit upon all flesh." Joel ii. 28. *Which—ye have heard of me*] Meaning, which ye have heard me say should be given. See John xiv. 26; xv. 26, &c. *Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost*] The words "baptized with" are probably used to denote the *abundance* of the gift; as though he had said, "Ye shall be plenteously imbued with the influences of the Holy Spirit."—*Bloomfield*. *Not many days hence*] If this conversation took place on the day of our Lord's ascension, which, for aught we perceive, might have been the case, then this promise was fulfilled on the tenth day thereafter; for the gift of the Holy Ghost was imparted on the day of Pentecost, and that feast occurred fifty days after that on which the passover feast, strictly so called, was eaten.

The chronological arrangement requires we should now turn to Luke xxiv. 44–50, the conversation there recorded being supposed to have taken place at this interview.

LUKE xxiv. 44-50.

44 And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

LUKE xxiv. 44-50.

Verse 44. *These are the words which I spake unto you—that all things must be fulfilled, &c.*] There is no record, saving this, that *exactly these words* were spoken by Jesus on any former occasion, but language of the same *import* is ascribed to him both by Mark and Luke. (See Mark x. 33 ; Luke xviii. 31.) “While I was yet with you,” means, While I was living with you—before my death. In the terms, “the Law of Moses,” “the Prophets,” and “the Psalms,” are included all the Old Testament scriptures, which the Jews were in the habit of distinguishing under these titles. In “the Law” they are stated to have reckoned the five books of Moses ; in “the Prophets,” the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets ; in “the Psalms,” the books of Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Songs of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah, and Chronicles.

Verses 45, 46. *Then opened he their understanding, &c.*] That is, by the special operation of his Spirit he enlightened their minds, thus giving them to understand the Scriptures. That this was an *extraordinary* inspiration, designed to qualify them to become unerring teachers of the truth of God, is evident from the following verses. We, however, may all have our minds spi-

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day :

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

ritually illuminated on the great truths of Scripture if we will humbly and earnestly, with faith in Christ, seek divine assistance. James i. 5. *Thus it is written, &c.*] The reference seems to be to the *sufferings* of Jesus, which in many particulars were clearly predicted in the writings of the Old Testament. The *object* of these sufferings is also therein set forth. *Behooved*] Became him thus to suffer, seeing that he had undertaken to become man's Deliverer.

Verse 47. *That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name*] That is, that the duty and absolute necessity of repentance should be enforced upon men "in his name," or by his authority; and that on repentance "remission" or forgiveness "of sin" should, by the like authority, be offered to all who would believe in him. *To all nations*] To every individual, of whatever nation. *Beginning at Jerusalem*] But why commence there? Because, 1st., The Jews were God's peculiar people, and to them belonged the first offers of salvation; and the fitness of things required, that if the gospel were first preached to Jews, the message should be opened at the Holy City. It may be, too, that the Saviour designed thus to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah, (ii. 3,) "For out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." See also Ps. cx. 2dly., That by taking this course the truth of the apostles' statements would be put beyond all question, not only by the corroborating testimony of a host of witnesses

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

49 And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

from foreign parts, gathered together at the feast of Pentecost, (by whom the information would be the more rapidly and extensively spread,) but especially because, by commencing this proclamation on the spot where the principal scenes on which it relied for support were enacted, opposition was deprived of the power of throwing a shade of doubt over the occurrences asserted to have taken place. Hence we find that, amid all the virulence of the enemies of the gospel, they never ventured to call in question the crucifixion or resurrection of Christ. 3dly., Because Jerusalem was the dwelling-place of the *murderers* of Christ; and if *they* might repent and be forgiven, there would be ample encouragement for the greatest sinners of other nations to repent and turn to God. There is, therefore, in this injunction, evident marks of the wisdom and goodness of its divine Author.

Verses 48, 49. *Ye are witnesses of these things*] That is, of his death and resurrection: the intelligence of which, together with that of the benefits arising therefrom, they were to spread throughout the world. How solemn and weighty their charge! This duty is now devolved on those whom God has called to the work of preaching the gospel; though there is a sense in which *all* Christians are Christ's "witnesses," and, as such, should ever be ready to testify of his love and mercy, and of the joys of his salvation. *Endued with power*] Fully fitted for their great work by the influence of the Holy Ghost upon their hearts and in their minds.

50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany; and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

Verse 50. *And he led them out as far as to Bethany*] That is, *to* Bethany: not, perhaps, into the village so called, but as far as to its boundary line, on the side next Jerusalem. This would be somewhere on the eastern declivity of Mount Olivet. It was, possibly, while walking to this place that some of the apostles asked the question noticed Acts i. 6, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"—meaning, Wilt thou at this time deliver us from the oppression of the Roman yoke, and "restore," or re-establish, the kingdom of Israel, and promote it to all that glory to which the people of the Jews expect the Messiah to raise it? That the apostles had expected Jesus would establish a glorious temporal dominion is evident from many passages of the Gospels; and that they had clung to this notion with strong tenacity, notwithstanding the efforts of Christ to lead them to a right view of his kingdom, is also apparent. The death of Jesus had, however, extinguished their hopes—they buried them as in his grave. But the resurrection of their Lord seems to have quickened their fondly-cherished desires into new life; and they therefore eagerly inquire whether these expectations shall "at this time" be realized. That they would be ultimately gratified they do not seem to have doubted,—the only question in their mind was as to the time—*now* or at some future period. From our Lord's reply, (Acts i. 7, 8,) it would seem that Jesus did not now think it expedient to correct their erroneous views of the nature of his kingdom; probably because he knew that would be most effectually done by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost when *his* gifts should be so wonderfully imparted

MARK xvi. 15-20.

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

to them on the approaching Pentecost. He did, however, reprove their curiosity—which may consequently be deemed out of place—by telling them it was not for them to know the times or the seasons—the more indefinite or the more exact and particular period when his kingdom—meaning his true, spiritual kingdom—should be established; but for their comfort assures them they shall “receive power”—meaning miraculous power, or the power to work miracles in a much enlarged sense, after that the promised effusions of the Holy Ghost had been shed upon them. He then repeats his declaration that they should be his “witnesses,” even unto “the uttermost parts of the earth.” The reader is now requested to turn to Mark xvi. 15, whose record of the remaining incidents of this heart-stirring occasion is more full than that of either of the other evangelists.

MARK xvi. 15-20.

Verse 15. *Go—and preach the gospel to every creature*] That is, to every human being. But for what purpose? Most assuredly that they might believe and be saved. No one of the human family is excluded from the *possibility* of this salvation by any decree of reprobation; but *all* to whom the offer is made, (and the offer is directed to be made “to every creature,”) may enjoy its benefits. Blessed be God, every human being is, then, redeemed from the curse of sin by the blood of Christ, (Col. i. 14; Heb. ii. 9,) and in consequence of that universal redemption the command has gone forth to offer salvation to all; and all who will comply with the conditions on which the proffer is made *shall* be saved.

16 He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Is it not surprising, that notwithstanding the explicit injunction of Jesus to "go—and preach the gospel to every creature," the apostles should so long and warmly have indulged their national prejudices against the possibility of the salvation of the heathen (otherwise than by their embracing Judaism) that it was not less than ten years after this before they opened their commission to a Gentile, and then only in consequence of a direct revelation from God so to do ? The first gospel sermon preached by an apostle before a company of Gentiles was that of Peter before Cornelius, as related Acts x.

Verse 16. *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved*] That is, he who trusts in Christ *as the Saviour of sinners*, and by baptism makes profession of his faith, (living in accordance with its requirements,) "shall be saved" from the guilt of, and condemnation due to, sin—saved from eternal death and admitted to eternal life.—Although baptism is here joined with faith, we are not to consider it [baptism] necessary to the reception of present justification, for the sinner is justified through faith only ; and that not because faith possesses any *merit*—the atonement and intercession of Jesus being the only meritorious cause of salvation—but simply because it is the appointed channel through which he may receive forgiveness of sin. Neither are we to understand the reception of baptism as absolutely *necessary* to final salvation, at least not in every case ; though, as Christ has been pleased to institute the ordinance, and commanded his followers to receive it, it becomes them to yield obedience to this, as to all other requirements of the gospel. *He that believeth not*] Whether baptized

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe:

or unbaptized. *Shall be damned*] The condemnation and punishment due to wilful and unpardoned sins will be visited upon him for ever and ever. Awful thought! By the *unbelief* above spoken of is meant, "either the obstinately refusing assent to the evidence of the truth of the gospel, or the not so believing it as to *obey* it, thus 'holding the truth in unrighteousness.'" In the former case, he who "believeth not" must be condemned to eternal misery, because he *rejects* the only means whereby he can be saved; in the latter, because, though yielding to its truths the assent of his understanding, he refuses to its claims the trust and obedience of his heart. Reason, and the general tenor of Scripture, require us to limit this condemnation to those whose unbelief is not involuntary, but wilful. (See, for instance, John iii. 18, 19, 36.) May we be led through divine grace to believe and obey the gospel of our Saviour!

Verse 17. *These signs shall follow them that believe*] That is, the "signs" or miracles enumerated shall be *performed* by "them that believe." The construction of the passage might lead to the supposition that the ability to produce these "signs" was to be common to all believers; but the history of the church shows this opinion to be erroneous: hence commentators generally think the promise is to be taken as made only to the apostles and their immediate successors, or helpers in the ministry, among whom these *gifts* were scattered according to the wisdom of the Holy Ghost—for we read that there were "diversities of gifts." 1 Cor. xii. 4. These "signs" were designed to serve as attestations, both of the truth of Christianity, and of the divine commission

In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any

of those who wrought them; and were well adapted to the introduction and establishment of a new form of religion claiming to be an immediate revelation from God, and waging unceasing war with all the time-honoured systems of belief extant in the world; pronouncing them all, with the single exception of the Jewish faith, to be but "lying vanities." It does not appear, however, that these miraculous endowments were designed to be of permanent duration in the church, for they soon ceased; while it does seem that their cessation was not accidental, or for want of suitable faith on the part of the early Christians, but in accordance with the plan and purpose of God, who saw that their continuation was no longer needed for the furtherance of his cause, their existence having become matter of known fact and notoriety. *In my name*] By my authority. There was in this respect an essential difference between the miracles of Jesus and of his apostles. Those of the former were wrought by the exercise of his own authority, without the invocation of any higher power; while those of the latter were wrought in the name, and by invoking the power of Christ. See Acts iii. 6, &c. He was, therefore, God; they were men. *Cast out devils*] This the Scriptures say they did. See Acts v. 16; viii. 7; x. 16-18. *Shall speak with new tongues*] That is, speak foreign and unknown languages, without studying them. This they received ability to do, and actually did, on the day of Pentecost and thenceforward.

Verse 18. *Shall take up serpents*] Meaning, should be preserved from the venom of serpents, if they should seize

deadly thing, it shall not hurt them ; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

them. This was usually regarded as at least a decisive test of supernatural protection, and not unfrequently of divine character. So when Paul at Melita shook off the viper which had seized him, the people fancied him to be a god. Acts xxviii. 5, &c. *If they drink any deadly thing*] Meaning, if any poisonous draught should be maliciously administered, which, but for supernatural care, would cause death, "it should not hurt them." The sacred history furnishes no instance of miraculous deliverance from such a death ; but it is said that several are recorded in the ancient ecclesiastical histories and martyrologies. As Dr. Doddridge observes, this promise would be important in an age when, and countries where, the art of poisoning was brought to such cursed refinement as prevailed throughout the East. *They shall lay hands on the sick, &c.*] This was one of the most frequently-exercised miraculous powers. Acts iii. 6, 7 ; xxviii. 8.

Verse 19. *After the Lord had spoken unto them*] After he had given them the above commands and promises. *He was received up into heaven*] From Luke xxiv. 50, 51, we learn that he had "lifted up his hands, and blessed them;" and that "while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." It is clear, from Acts i. 9, that Jesus ascended in a visible manner : not vanishing away, but openly and steadily rising, in the presence of his disciples, until "a cloud received him out of their sight." The knowledge of this fact is important ; for, as Dr. Jennings justly observes, it was much more needful that our Lord should be seen to ascend to

heaven, than that he should be seen to rise from the dead: for his disciples had frequent opportunities of seeing him, and of conversing with him, after his resurrection, and consequently could easily satisfy themselves of the reality of that resurrection, but they could not have had equally satisfactory evidence of his ascension, unless they had seen him go up toward heaven. We are thus put in possession of the glorious truth, that our Lord entered heaven clothed with a living human body: not, to be sure, a gross, sensual body, as are those in which we still dwell, but with a refined and spiritualized one, similar to those which the saints shall possess after the general resurrection. He still bears, therefore, a perfectly human as well as a perfectly divine nature; and as the God-man, "ever liveth to make intercession for us"—at least to the period of the winding up of this world's history, and the fixing of each man's destiny. Heb. ix. 24. *Sat on the right hand of God*] As the Father is a purely spiritual being, he is, of course, "without body or parts." The language of the text must, therefore, be figurative, denoting that Jesus enjoys the highest honour and the most intimate union with the Father.

Luke tells us, (xxiv. 52,) that immediately after the ascension of Christ, the apostles "worshipped him:"—by which he must mean that they "worshipped him" in a religious manner—paid him divine adoration. It was probably while they were thus engaged, with their eyes uplifted to heaven, that the "two men in white apparel"—meaning, two angels—addressed them, saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven!—this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." The words, "shall so come in like man-

20 And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

JOHN XX. 30, 31, and xxi. 25.

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book :

ner," mean, shall come *visibly, openly*, as ye have seen him depart this world. The *time* of that coming will be at the end of the world; and its *object*, the judgment of all mankind, and the fixing their eternal destiny. On the departure, apparently, of these heavenly visitors, the disciples "returned to Jerusalem with great joy," being fully satisfied that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of God;" and were, until the day of Pentecost, "continually in the temple;"—that is, were constant and assiduous in the public exercises of religion, being present at all the services of His house.

Verse 20. *They went forth*] Went forth preaching the gospel:—this was after the day of Pentecost. *The Lord*] The Lord Jesus Christ. *Working with them*] By the secret influences of his grace preparing the hearts of men for the reception of the gospel, and inclining them to embrace the truth. *And confirming the word*] By firmly fixing in the mind and heart the doctrine embraced, and so causing it to become permanent. *With signs following*] By the miracles he enabled them to perform. These were the convincing proof of the truth of Christianity, and aided much in "confirming" the believers in the faith of Christ.

JOHN XX. 30, 31, and xxi. 25.

Verses 30, 31. *Many other signs did Jesus*] The

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Chap. xxi. 25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

word rendered "signs" here denotes, in the opinion of Bloomfield, not only the *miracles* of Jesus, but the various kinds of evidence he gave of being the Messiah. Ample and convincing as those are which John has furnished, he asserts that many more were exhibited, some of which are adduced by the other evangelists, and some have never been recorded. *These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ*] It was chiefly to defend this essential truth that John wrote his Gospel ; and the design is kept in view throughout the book. The miracles, facts, arguments, instructions, and conversations of our Lord all tend to this point. If the remembrance of this be kept in the reader's mind, it will throw much light on the book.

Chap. xxi. 25. *The world could not contain the books, &c.*] An Oriental and hyperbolical mode of expression, denoting that the remarkable actions and discourses of Jesus were exceedingly numerous. Although a record of *all* these acts and sayings has not come down to us, we have still reason cheerfully to acquiesce in the providence of Him who "doeth all things well." Enough is recorded to direct our faith and regulate our practice.

APPENDIX.

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE NOTICES OF JERUSALEM;
COMPILED FROM ROBINSON, OLIN, AND HARDY.

JERUSALEM was the scene of more important occurrences, and is hallowed by higher and more sacred associations, than any other spot on the face of the earth. Here prophets, inspired by the Holy Ghost, drew aside the veil that hides coming events, and laid open the scenes of the future. Here the Saviour walked and talked, and did many of his mighty works; and here he offered himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world. It witnessed the resurrection and ascension of our Lord, and the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit under the new dispensation. Here the Christian church originated, and for nearly two thousand years it has been viewed by the most enlightened nations of the earth as the cradle of their faith. By Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans, it is regarded and denominated the "Holy City."

The first mention of Jerusalem occurs in Gen xiv. 18, under the name of Salem, which signifies *Peace*. In Joshua xviii. 28, and Judges xix. 10, it is called Jebus, from the Jebusites, who were then its inhabitants. The city was taken from them by Joshua; but they must either have retained, or afterward regained one portion of it, for we find that they held possession of the "strong hold of Zion" as late as the time of David, by whom it was taken from them. 2 Sam. v. 6-9. David then enlarged and fortified the city, and made it his residence, and henceforth Jerusalem was the metropolis of the Jewish kingdom. It was still further enlarged and adorned by Solomon, who erected the magnificent temple, which was the glory and pride not only of the city, but of the whole nation, and to which the Jews from all parts of the country were required annually to repair, at the recurrence of their great religious festivals. The reign of Solomon was the golden age of Jerusalem, which, for its size, was then doubtless the richest and most

flourishing city in the world. In the reign of his son and successor Rehoboam, the kingdom was divided, and Jerusalem became the capital city of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which alone adhered to Rehoboam. Five years after the accession of Rehoboam, Jerusalem was taken by Sushak, king of Egypt, who plundered the temple and palace of their treasures. 1 Kings xiv. 27. One hundred and forty-five years after, it suffered the same fate from Jehoash, king of Israel. 2 Kings xiv. 13, 14. One hundred and fifty years from this period it was again taken, by the Assyrians, who carried Manasseh, the king, a prisoner to Babylon. 2 Chron. xxxiii. Sixty-six years later, it was taken by Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt. 2 Kings xxiii. After this Jerusalem was three times besieged and taken by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. The last of these sieges was the most terrible the city ever sustained, except that which preceded its destruction by Titus; it continued for two years, during a great part of which the inhabitants suffered all the horrors of famine. The year following its capture, Nebuzaradan, with his army, entered the city, plundered it of whatever was valuable, and then burned and utterly destroyed it, with its temple and walls, carrying the greater part of the inhabitants to Babylon.

Jerusalem remained desolate till the end of the seventy years' captivity, when Cyrus, the conqueror of Babylon, gave the Jews permission to return and rebuild their city and temple. In the accomplishment of this undertaking the Jews met with many obstacles, and some serious interruptions from the hostility of the neighbouring states, especially their old enemies the Ammonites; but at length they succeeded in completing the temple, and surrounding the city, now gradually rising from its ruins, by a wall.

Jerusalem, thus restored, though not entirely independent, continued to flourish with different degrees of prosperity till the year 170 B. C., when that detestable tyrant, Antiochus Epiphanes, enraged at hearing that the Jews had rejoiced at a false report of his death, plundered the city, and slew many thousands of its inhabitants; and to manifest his contempt

of their religion, he profaned the temple by the blood of swine, which he caused to be slaughtered within the very sanctuary, and sacrificed upon the altar of burnt-offering. He also set up in the temple a statue of Jupiter, and endeavoured to compel the Jews to conform to the religion of the Greeks. Two years after, he sent to Jerusalem an army of twenty-two thousand men, under the command of Apollonius, who despoiled the city, and pulled down the walls. Those Jews who remained true to their religion fled to the mountains, and at length, under the standard of the Maccabees, succeeded, after a noble struggle, in ridding the country of its barbarous invaders. Three years and a half after the desolation of the city by Apollonius, the temple was purified and dedicated anew, and its worship restored, which was continued until its final destruction by the Romans.

The horrors which accompanied the siege of Jerusalem by Titus are without a parallel in the world's history. The sufferings of the people, from famine and other causes, far exceed any thing of the kind which they or any other people ever endured. Upward of a million persons perished either in the siege or the slaughter which followed.

Jerusalem remained in ruins, and almost depopulated nearly fifty years, when the emperor Adrian, incensed by repeated insurrections of the Jews, razed it to the ground, and on its site erected a Roman town, which he called *Elia Capatolina*, and from which the Jews were excluded. This name it retained till the early part of the fourth century, when, by the conversion of Constantine, Christianity became the ruling religion of the Roman empire. The city then resumed its ancient name, and the emperor, and his mother Helena, adorned it with many new edifices and churches, especially the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which, though some distance within the city, was said to cover the site of the crucifixion and the sepulchre of our Lord. About thirty years after, the emperor Julian, who apostatized from Christianity, attempted to disprove the prophecies by rebuilding the temple, but this undertaking was stopped in its com-

mencement by balls of fire bursting from the earth, so that the workmen were unable to proceed. This miraculous interposition is attested by many creditable witnesses and historians. So stubborn, indeed, is the proof of this miracle, that even the infidel historian Gibbon, who strives to invalidate it, is obliged to acknowledge the general fact.

As Christianity extended through the Roman empire, Jerusalem became an object of increased veneration, and pilgrims from all parts flocked thither to visit the "holy places." In the beginning of the seventh century it was attacked and plundered by Chosroes, king of Persia, by whom many thousands of the Christian inhabitants were killed or sold for slaves. The Persians, however, did not hold it long, being defeated and driven out by the emperor Heraclius; and the Christians of Jerusalem were restored to their former state of peaceful security. The Jews were still forbidden to come within three miles of their ancient capital. Not many years after, a still greater calamity befell this ill-fated city. The conquering Saracens invaded Palestine in the year 637, and Jerusalem, after once more undergoing the horrors of a protracted siege, fell into the hands of the caliph Omar, who at the same time possessed himself of the whole country. He built on the site of the ancient Jewish temple the splendid mosque still called by his name. The Saracens, unwilling to forego the profits derived from the Christian pilgrims, allowed them still to resort to the holy city on the payment of a considerable tax, so that Jerusalem was nearly as much frequented as ever, until, in 1077, it fell into the hands of the Turks, who committed such outrages on the pilgrims that they could not visit it in safety. The report of these violences being carried to Europe, acted upon the religious and military spirit of the age so as to produce the Crusades; the first result of which was to wrest Jerusalem from the hands of the Mohammedans. It was taken in 1099 by Godfrey of Bouillon, who in reward of his valor was created king of Jerusalem. That city, with the surrounding territory, was ruled more than sixty years by five Latin kings, when it yielded to the arms of Saladin. After

successively changing its Moslem masters, it was annexed in 1517 to the Turkish empire, of which it has ever since formed a part, except the few years it was under the dominion of Mohammed Ali.

Having given a concise account of the history of the "Holy City," we will now proceed to notice its situation, and give a brief description of its present appearance, condition, population, &c. It is situated between the 31st and 32d degrees of north latitude, and 35th and 36th degrees of east longitude. It is built on four hills,—Zion, Moriah, Acra, and Bezetha,—and is environed by other hills of higher elevation, separated from those on which the city stands by deep ravines, except on the north. Its site was anciently much more uneven than it is now. Josephus speaks of a valley between the city and the temple, and of another valley that seems to have run nearly along the centre of the city. The ground is still uneven, but there is no part within the walls that could with propriety be called a valley. The several hills on which the city stands are still easily discerned, though the natural surface has undergone great changes. Some of the elevations were cut down, and the valleys between them filled up by the Asmonean kings; and the decay of ancient buildings, and the accumulation of rubbish through many ages, have probably done yet more to alter the original features of this site. Dr. Olin states, that near the summit of Mount Zion, where the accumulations are likely to be much less than in the valleys, persons have dug thirty feet without reaching the original surface.

The circumference of the modern city, as measured outside the walls by Dr. Robinson, is 4326 yards, not quite two miles and a half. The ancient city was of much greater extent, being about four miles in circuit, embracing the whole of Mount Zion, and a portion of the ground on the north of the city, now without the walls.

The present walls were built in 1542. They appear to occupy very nearly the site of the former walls of the middle ages, which were several times thrown down and rebuilt

during the Crusades. The materials were, probably, those of former walls; and are in great part apparently ancient. They consist wholly of hewn stones, in general not very large, (commonly not more than a foot or eighteen inches in diameter,) laid in mortar.—They have quite a formidable and imposing appearance, especially when casually observed from without. They are strengthened, or rather adorned, with towers and battlements, the latter crowning a breastwork with loopholes. The height of the walls varies much, owing to the inequality of the ground; in some parts it is not more than twenty or twenty-five feet, while in the more exposed localities, where the ravines contribute less to the security of the city, they have an elevation of about sixty feet. Flights of steps, on the inside of the wall, lead up to the top, where commanding views of the environs of the city are obtained, and an airy, agreeable promenade may be enjoyed. A parapet, on the outer edge of the walls, adds to the security and pleasure of a walk upon these lofty bulwarks.

There are only four gates now in use—-one on each side of the city. St. Stephen's gate, on the east, leads to the Mount of Olives, Bethany, and Jericho. Zion gate, on the south, leads to that part of Mount Zion which is without the walls, and which is much resorted to, as being the great burial place of the Christian inhabitants, as well as for its traditional sanctity as the site of David's tomb, &c. The Bethlehem gate, on the west, is the termination of the important routes coming in from Jaffa, Bethlehem, and Hebron. On the north is the Damascus gate, which must at all times have been a great public thoroughfare, as the easiest approach from Samaria and Galilee.

The best sight of Jerusalem is from the Mount of Olives, which lies about half a mile on the east, and from which the view of the city given as our frontispiece was taken. Viewed from this spot Jerusalem is still a lovely, a magnificent object. Few Eastern towns offer a more imposing spectacle to the eye of the beholder, who here completely overlooks the city, almost every house being distinctly visible. The city, from this point,

appears to be a regular inclined plane, sloping gently and uniformly from west to east, or toward the observer, and indented by a slight depression or shallow vale running nearly through the centre in the same direction. The south-east corner of the quadrangle, (for that may be assumed as the figure formed by the walls,) that which is nearest the observer, is occupied by the Mosque of Omar, and its extensive and beautiful grounds. This is Mount Moriah, the site of Solomon's temple, and the ground embraced in the sacred enclosure, which conforms to that of the ancient temple, occupies an eighth of the whole of the modern city. It is covered with green sward, and planted sparingly with olive, cypress, and other trees, and is certainly the most lovely feature of the town. The south-west quarter of the city, embracing that part of Mount Zion which is now within the walls, is to a great extent occupied by the Armenian convent, an enormous edifice, which is the only conspicuous object in this neighbourhood. In the north-west quarter is seen the Latin convent, another very extensive establishment. About midway between the two convents is the castle or citadel, near the Bethlehem gate. The north-east quarter of Jerusalem is but partially built up, and has more the aspect of a rambling village than of a crowded city. The Church of the Sepulchre, with its domes, is seen near the centre of the city, behind the Mosque of Omar, and is a conspicuous object. There are no other buildings which, either from their size or beauty, are likely to attract attention. Eight or ten minarets mark the position of so many mosques in different parts of the city, but are only noticed because of their elevation above the surrounding objects. Such is the modern Jerusalem, as seen from the spot on which our Saviour stood when he beheld the ancient city and wept over it, in view of its then approaching calamities.

But if Jerusalem presents an imposing appearance when viewed from without, the illusion vanishes as soon as the traveller enters its gates. The surface, which appeared to be a gently-inclining plain, he now finds to be so full of inequalities that there is not a level street of any length in the city ;

and his eye rests upon many ruinous piles, and a thousand other disagreeable objects, which were before concealed or disguised by the distance. The streets, which run nearly at right angles with each other, are, without exception, narrow, seldom more than eight or ten feet wide. The houses often meet, and in some instances a building occupies both sides of the street, which runs under a succession of arches, barely high enough to permit an equestrian to pass under them. A canopy of old mats or planks is suspended over the principal streets when not arched. This practice, which has its origin in the heat of the climate, gives a gloomy aspect to the most lively parts of the city. The pavements of the streets are of the worst possible description.—They are formed of fragments of limestone of unequal size and thickness, and arranged with no apparent regard to human comfort. On each side, next to the shops, is a sort of raised way, one or two feet high, formed of a row of rough stones, large or small differently. The utmost care is necessary to avoid falling, or dashing the foot against a projecting stone. Between these two sidewalks is a path, or rather gutter, also paved, but in a style yet more detestable, for donkeys and horses, which have barely room to pass each other. The steepness of the ground, however, contributes to keep the streets somewhat cleaner than those of most Eastern cities.

The houses are built of large rough stones, close to each other, and are two stories high. For the most part there are no windows next the street, little more being seen from thence than a plain wall with a mean entrance. They are generally built in the form of a quadrangle, round an open court, from which they receive light. The lower story, which consists of arches, serving as a foundation for the superstructure, is occupied for lumber rooms, kitchens, cisterns, stables, or servants' rooms. None but the poor would consent to live in these low dark cells. The principal apartments are upon the second story. The rain-water which falls upon the pavement of the court is carefully conducted, by means of gutters, into cisterns, where it is preserved for domestic uses. The people

of Jerusalem rely chiefly upon these reservoirs for their supply of this indispensable article.

Stone is employed in building for all the purposes to which it can possibly be applied, and Jerusalem is hardly more exposed to accidents by fire than a quarry or subterranean cavern. The floors, stairs, &c., are of stone, and the ceiling is usually formed by a coat of plaster laid upon the stones, which at the same time form the roof and the vaulted top of the room. Doors, sashes, and a few other appurtenances are all that can usually be afforded of a material so expensive as wood. The little timber which is used is mostly brought from Mount Lebanon, as in the days of Solomon.

A large number of houses in Jerusalem are in a dilapidated and ruinous state. Nobody seems to make repairs as long as the dwelling does not absolutely refuse him shelter and safety. If one room tumbles about his ears he removes into another, and permits rubbish and vermin to accumulate as they will in the deserted halls. Tottering stair-cases are propped to prevent their fall, and when the edifice becomes untenable, the occupant seeks another a little less ruinous, leaving the wreck to a smaller or more wretched family, or, more probably, to a goatherd and his flock. Habitations which have a very respectable appearance, as seen from the street, are often found, upon entering them, to be little better than heaps of ruins.

How has the glory of Jerusalem departed since the Psalmist exclaimed, "Walk about Zion, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generations following!" *Psa. xlviii.* Then, and in the time of Christ, it must have presented to the spectator on the Mount of Olives one of the most magnificent sights in the world. At a sudden turn in the road from Bethany (the very place from which our Lord beheld it) the city comes at once into sight. Between the mountain and the city was a deep and narrow ravine then, as now, used as a place of burial, studded with the whited sepulchres of the prophets, referred to by our Saviour as the graves of the scribes and Pharisees. The city was defended on this side by a triple wall,

and towers, monuments, and palaces presented themselves in every direction. On the opposite side of the valley the hill of the city rose perpendicularly five hundred feet, and was built up with stones of almost incredible size. The temple stood on the summit of this precipice, and our Saviour, being raised a little above it, would be able to look over its walls into the courts by which it was surrounded. We are told that Herod had employed ten thousand men during the space of eight years to strengthen, restore, and enlarge it. It had a portico of white marble, the columns of which were each of one stone, and forty-four feet long. It had nine gates, covered over with silver and gold, and another that was still more precious, made of Corinthian brass. The parts that were not gilded were beautifully white, so that it appeared at a distance like a mountain of snow. It was covered in front with plates of gold, and when the sun shone upon it, and lighted it up into glory, it was impossible to look at it from its brightness. But now "from the daughter of Zion all her glory is departed."

The population of Jerusalem has been variously estimated at from ten to thirty thousand. Dr. Robinson, whose opportunities of ascertaining the truth of the matter were probably much better than those of any preceding traveller, computed the stated population, exclusive of the garrison, to be eleven thousand five hundred, of whom about three thousand are Jews, near four thousand Christians, of the Greek, Romish, and Armenian Churches, and the remainder Mohammedans.

The Jews occupy the eastern part of Mount Zion, the most miserable and filthy part of the city. They are, in general, extremely poor. Every thing about them exhibits signs of depression and misery, and they are oppressed and despised both by Mohammedans and (so called) Christians. They are, for the most part, not natives, but such as have come up to spend the remnant of their days in the holy city of their fathers, and lay their bones in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which is their burial place.

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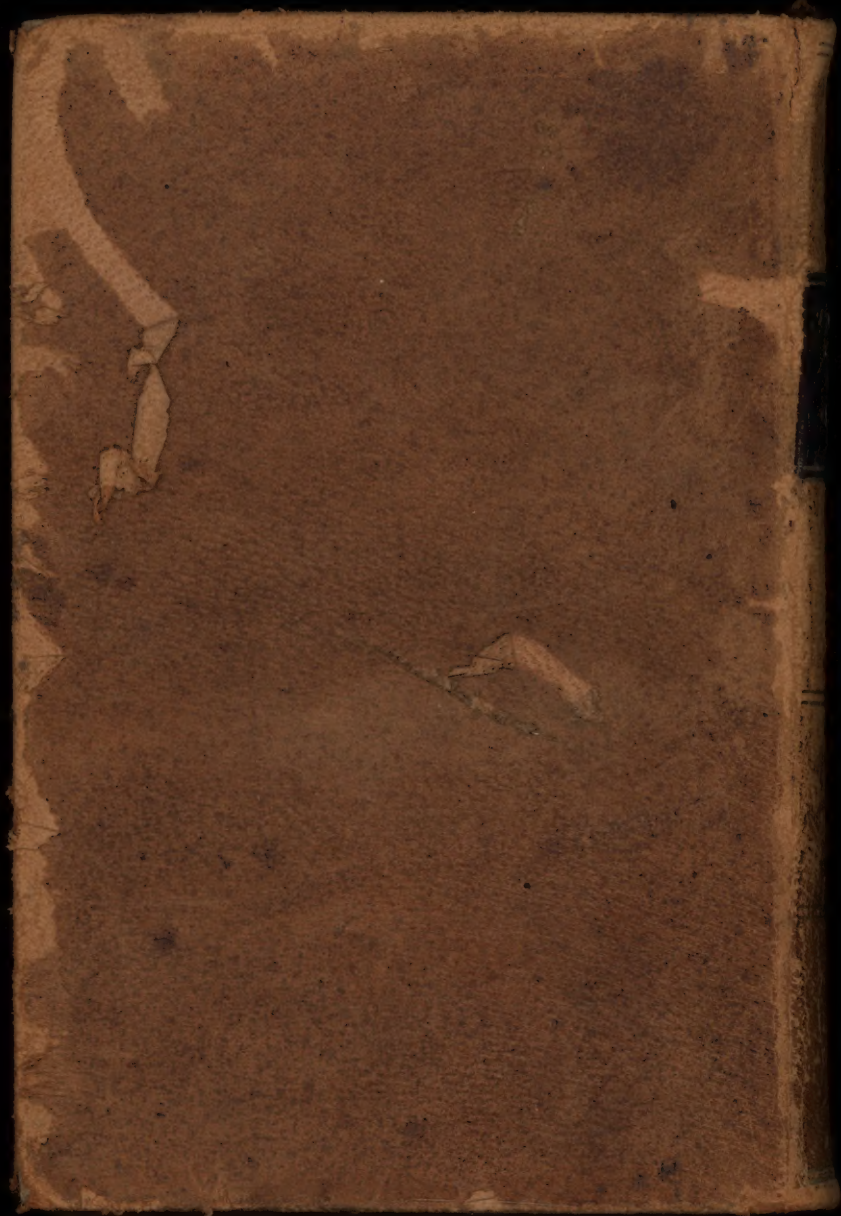
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